

THE
CONVERSATION
OF
GENTLEMEN

CONSIDERED

In most of the Ways, that make their mutual
Company Agreeable, or Disagreeable.

IN
SIX DIALOGUES.

*Quid esse potest, in otio, aut jucundius, aut magis
proprium humanitatis, quàm sermo facetus, &
nullâ in re rudis. Cic. De Oratore. Lib. I.*

L O N D O N,

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M DCC XXXVIII.

THE
CONVEYANCE

OF

THE



SIX

PLATES

OF

THE



T H E
P R E F A C E.



CONVERSATION takes up a great Part, and influences almost every Part of Life. Proper Reflections upon the due Methods of Converſing, are therefore of great Moment.

Such is the Deſign of the following Sheets, whereof ſeveral were written many Years ſince, and approved by the ingenious Author of *The Gentleman Inſtructed*, with whom I was well acquainted. He encouraged me to purſue the Work. How the finiſhing, and publiſhing of it was delayed, is not

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material: Nor is it generally of Moment, or agreeable to Readers, to have a large Preface or Apology for such Pieces. But it is hoped I may be indulged in the Addition of the following Lines.

In most Men there is a various Mixture of Qualities. It is therefore impossible to describe their Ways of Converſing, without interweaving, upon Occaſions, in the Deſcription of one Kind, ſomething like what was partly ſaid of another. To avoid this, under a Pretence of avoiding Repetitions, would be to fail in the true Account of what happens in Converſation. That which will be always found in Reality, the Reader muſt allow to be ſpoken of in Diſcourſes of this Nature. This is all the Excuse I have for ſuch Places as may ſeem to repeat ſome few Reflections, which were mentioned in other Parts. It is ſufficient that the Turn be different,

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different, tho' the Substance of the Remark should, in some respects, be partly the same with what had been already advanced in some of the foregoing Characters or Reflections.

I had never seen *Bellegarde's* Works upon the like Subjects, till I was writing out the two last Sheets of this. Having then an Opportunity of seeing his *Modoles de Conversations*, and his *Reflexions sur le Ridicule* (and these only) I read them over, to observe, how far I might have fallen into the same Thoughts with any of his. The great Likeness of Subject must needs occasion a Resemblance in some Reflections. If we are found (which will be seldom) to be sometimes in a like way of expressing the Remarks, I can assure the Reader, it is by Accident. And the same I can truly affirm of any other Books of such a Nature; not having, to my Knowledge, made any
other

other Use of any, than what I have fairly accounted for in the *Quotations*.

And in mentioning *Quotations*, the Reader is desired to observe, they are sometimes expressly said to be read from Books at hand. The same he is desired to suppose in other Places, were the things cited are too long, or too particular, to be thought cited by Memory alone. It is hoped, this will not seem unnatural in Conferences held in a Library, and with which the Speakers may easily be supposed to be well acquainted.

The Names used in describing Characters, are commonly from such *Greek Words* as import some remarkable Particularities in the *Fictitious Persons*. Where no very close Derivation of Names occurred readily, I stood not long upon the Search, but took those, which soon presented themselves to my Pen. For as such feigned Names
are

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are not material, so in this, as in other things, the Poet had Reason to say, *It is a Folly to be laborious in Trifles.*

— *Stultus labor est ineptiarum.*

Among the great Variety of Characters, spoken of in these Dialogues, some might perhaps think the Author had in his Eye, upon Occasions, some particular Persons, whom he has known. Thus some things might be construed into Flattery, others into Satire; if I could not, with the utmost Sincerity, affirm, that wherever I had the least Suspicion, that any determinate Person might seem to be meant (excepting only some Historical Facts related from other Authors) it was my constant Care, to intermix such Strokes, as were very different from the real Character of any Persons, with whom I ever was acquainted.

After

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After this Declaration, if any one should think himself painted or delineated; all that either can, or need be said, is

Qui capit, ille facit.

He, that so takes it, is the Satirist; not the Writer of the Character. And if there are Men, who can never meet with any Oddness described, but they will look upon it as their unquestionable Property, who can help it?



T H E



THE
CONVERSATION
OF
GENTLEMEN.

DIALOGUE I.

BETWEEN

CLEANDER and *EUDOXUS.*

CLEANDER.



WE are too well acquainted, *Eudoxus*, to count the Number, or measure the Distance of our mutual Visits. I may therefore very readily own, that this quick Visit, is not a ceremonious Return of that you was pleased to make me immediately
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at my coming to Town. To be plain, it is not to compliment you, but to secure myself from an impending Danger.

EUDOX. By your Smile I presume, the Danger was not great. However, as I am always glad to enjoy your Company, so it will add to the Pleasure, if you can find any Relief in mine.

CLEAND. The Relief will be particularly proper in my Case. For I was threatened with the Company of *Philomilius*. You know too well what his Conversation is, to wonder that I was willing to avoid it.

EUDOX. It is the greater Pity, that young Gentlemen should prove so very disagreeable, since he has in Reality several good Qualities. With a great Share of good Nature, and no great want of good Sense, he has also a very graceful Air and Mien. Yet with all these Helps to please, he has the Secret of being very disagreeable. And in general, one cannot but often reflect that, if it were not daily experienced, it would be incredible, that nothing should be more practiced, and yet scarce any thing so ill managed as *Conversation*. There are few People but love to converse, and yet fewer who know how to do it well.

CLEAND.

CLEAND. It is a saying of Mr. Cowley, (a) that *it is very phantastical and contradictory in human Nature, that Men should love themselves above all the rest of the World, and yet never endure to be with themselves.* And I believe we may add, that to be well in Company, one of the first Rules is, for a Man to be, as the French expresses it, *well with himself.*

EUDOX. I would not be thought guilty of aiming at a trifling Jingle of Words, in what I am going to add. But certainly it is of great Moment to Agreeableness of Conversation, not only for every Man to be *well with himself*, but also *to be himself.* That is, to be acquainted with, and to pursue his own *Nature and Genius*, and proper *Aptitude.* Otherwise he may despair of ever taking a becoming Turn.

CLEAND. By Observation and Industry, several Improvements may indeed be at length nicely wrought into the Ground-work, or be as it were naturalized by Practice. Yet most certainly, some thing there is in every one, like what we find in different Soils, which will never yield some certain Products. All we can do, is to make the best of what Nature has given.

(a) Essay of Solitude.

Every one's proper *Genius* should be carried as far as it will bear. But to put on another, will be a vain Endeavour, and always accompanied with that Ungracefulness of *Affectation*, which is sure to displease.

EUDOX. Perhaps the moral Account of that certain Displeasure which rises from Affectation, must be taken from the Aversion we naturally have to a false Mind. One that is not true to himself, will hardly be thought so to another; and he that is found to be industriously forging his exterior Comportment, will commonly be thought a sort of a Cheat in other things besides his Looks, his Gait, and his manner of Speech. While a false Tone of the Voice is assumed, and a constrained Air of the Face, it will incline People to suspect a fallacious Disposition in other Respects; and therefore, unpolished Nature, plain and rough Dealing, nay even Faults and Imperfections, are preferable to a forced Imitation of Graces and Beauties. A Counterfeit of the best Qualities is a kind of Hypocrisy; and wanting that Beauty which naturally accompanies all that is genuine and easy, becomes both awkward, and odious.

CLEAND. And yet how many do we find, who seem determined to be rather like
any

any one, than to be themselves? Take *Pasander*, for Example. Upon a Desire of pleasing every one, he is every one's Ape. How often does he put me in mind of a saying of Sir *William Cornwalllys*, which I heard quoted some while since, *that some People never come from any Company without a new Grace, as they think it, just as Clowns never come without Ginger-bread from a Fair.* Thus *Pasander* is a new Man several times in a Day. When he comes from a sober and grave Man, he is all *Formality* and *Preciseness*. A *Frenchman* shall set him, presently after, into what he calls *Vivacity*; and now, *alerte* is the Word; he will frisk it about in a grave Assembly. If you put him in mind of the Regard proper to the Company and Place, he replies upon you with a Cringe and a Smile, *Ha! Monsieur, there is nothing like the French! so Gay and Easy!*

EUDOX. A Gentleman assured me, that when he was at *Rome* viewing the *Vatican* in Company of an Ambassador, a *French* Gentleman struck into a *Minuet*, with a very easy Air. Being told however, that the Step was unseasonable, he answered, *Il faut faire quelque chose pour se distinguer.* I hope *Pasander* would not go so far upon this Principle of *distinguishing* himself.

himself. I suppose too, that what may be said of affected Imitation, is not so to be understood, but that it may be commendable to endeavour at a proper Resemblance of such Persons, as we see are generally liked in Company. It is true, that to do this rightly, it must be carried on much after the same way, as imitating the Style, and Beauties of great Authors. To take whole Passages just as they stand, is not to be an Imitator, but a *Plagiary*. What is drawn from such Authors must be altered and changed, like the Collection made by Bees (it is the Comparison used by *Seneca*) it must have a different Taste and Flavor from any of the Flowers from which it is drawn. (b) He adds another Comparison in the same Place, from the Meats we eat. While they remain in their own Substance and Qualities, they load the Stomach; when changed from what they were, they turn to Nourishment and Blood. (c) Thus there

(b) Apes debemus imitari, & quæcunque ex diversa lectione conessimus, separare, & in unum saporem varia illa libamenta confundere; ut etiam si appareat unde sit, aliud tamen esse, quam unde sumptum est, appareat. *Epist.* 85.

(c) Alimenta quæ accepimus, quamdiu in suâ qualitate perdurant, & solida innatant stomacho, onera sunt. At cum, ex eo quod erant, mutata sunt, tunc demum in vires & sanguinem transeunt. *Ibidem.*

is an indigested Imitation, which is no less prejudicial to a proper Beauty of Behaviour in Company, than Crudities in the Stomach are to the Body.

CLEAND. Those same Comparisons may farther teach us, that our Imitation must be framed from several, rather than from some one only Person whom we admire. Not after the ridiculous way of *Pasander*. Such as I already hinted, are not to be called Imitators, but Apes. In proposing to ourselves one single Person, the Imitation will be apt to be too apparent; and consequently can scarce be free from a visible Affectation. Whereas a Mixture from the several good Qualities of different Persons, may better be wrought imperceptibly into a way which will become natural. It is scarce possible that a single Person's Qualifications should suit our Genius in every particular. Something from several, may likely hit our proper Disposition. Yet even this various Collection of Good, must be drawn gradually. If taken too suddenly, it will not be rightly digested into a natural kind of Constitution.

EUDOX. There are few People but are sensible of this in the main. They are so pleased with the agreeable ways of conversing, which they meet with in others, that they

they readily desire, and propose to be like them. The Misfortune is, they want Perseverance in so good a Design. For a while, they keep a closer guard upon themselves. Then soon again they indulge a careless Liberty, and will not bear the requisite Constraint to conquer their disobliging Humours, Habits, or Passions. Thus they are soon thrown back into their natural or customary Failings. Whereas a constant Care for a considerable while together, would work the proper Improvements into our very Nature; or Custom itself would be in us, as it is in the Proverb, a *second Nature*.

CLEAND. Nothing in Effect is so difficult, but it becomes easy in Time. A long Slavery is scarce discerned from Liberty. A long continued Solitude grows in a manner natural, tho' Nature has made us sociable. What we habitually Will, becomes as it were necessary, and almost ceases to be voluntary. A long continued Custom, by the Authority of Time, stands a Law. It will as certainly pass into a natural, as into a legal kind of Necessity. Estates find different Masters by Prescription, which makes a sufficient Title in Civil Government. We find that good and bad Habits, plead also a kind of Prescription in
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the Government of particular Persons; and as Custom is very prevalent in other things, so it is also in the Methods of Conversation. With Regard indeed to moral Good, or Evil, there is this Difference, that as corrupted Nature leads to Sin, so vicious Habits are more easily contracted, and more difficult to be broken off, than the contrary.

EUDOX. And therefore with Regard to such Failures in Conversation, as either directly are from Vice, or intermixt with irregular Passions, we must be more careful than in other Defects, not to let them grow into a Habit. We see how strong either Nature, or Habits are, even separately. What do we think they will prove, when united?

CLEAND. Defects, when fixt upon that double Title, will prove almost insuperable. For it is not only in Passions, but also in Humours which are grounded in them, or increased by them, as it is in Rivers. The Similitude is so well known, that it is scarce a Metaphor to speak of the Stream of Passions. Rivers small in their Beginnings, as they advance in their Course, become more absolute in their Power. Easily turned off at first, they soon roll along too strong for Opposition, and even made stronger by it. Receiving new Supplies from smaller Rivulets,

Rivulets, which bring in their Streams, or from sudden Falls of Rain or Torrents, their impetuous Course is soon too great to be managed, without a very uncommon Strength, and Art; and often too violent for any human Skill and Power. They force on their Passage, till lost in the Sea. So Passions and Humours, weak at first, by degrees gain new Force, and become almost irresistible. Easily manageable in the Beginning, they soon take a Course, that is scarce to be ruled or stopt. By constant Supplies from the ordinary Occurrences of Life, their Force is soon too great for any thing but extraordinary Efforts of the Will, and Succours of Grace. But when augmented by such Additions as rush in upon particular Occasions, they become a kind of Necessity, and force on their way into an Abyss of Vice and Sin.

EUDOX. By your ready use of such Comparisons, I perceive you are of Sir *Edmund Bacon's* Opinion (*d*) that *Nature, if well studied, is the best Moralist*. Wherein I readily agree with you. And therefore, upon the Considerations you have mentioned, it were certainly a happy thing, if Affectation, and a mistaken Imitation, fe-

(*d*) As cited by Sir H. Wotton.

duced young Men into nothing worse than impertinent Follies. But so it is, that unfortunately, they will chiefly be imitating the Vices of others. When they enter into the World, they are apt to think that, to shew they are set loose from the Guard of a Mother, and a Tutor, and no longer under the Restraint of Childhood, or a College, they must prove it, by casting off all Modesty and Reserve. They will soon tell you that, Formalities of Education is what they are happily got over. To prove this important Point with a clear Instance, they begin to talk wildly without a Blush. They even affect to be ashamed of nothing but of seeming Modest; as if the Freedom blonging to a Man, were the Liberty of being Imprudent; or that, upon their first setting out, they were to signalize their coming to Age, by a full Growth of Immorality.

CLEAND. It is indeed too fatal a Truth, that the Contagion of bad Company carries with it a very swift and strong Poison. A proper, civil, and taking Behaviour, is far from being so readily learnt, as that which is prophane or immoral. The Ill-bred and the Rude, by much conversing with them, will communicate a great Share of their disagreeable Ways. But the Irreligious,

ligious, and Debauched do still more easily inspire their Vices. This makes it a difficult Point to determine, how far young Men should be led into Company in the open World. To confine them to a small number of Persons, will be apt to make them sheepish in Occurrences of different Company. On the other hand, to enter promiscuously into the World will endanger Morality and Virtue (*e*).

EUDOX. In one Case they will be apt to remain over-ignorant of the World; in the other they will hardly remain innocent. Of the two, it is certainly better to be ignorant of what is called the World, than to learn its Vices: Better to be impolite than debauched: And remain awkward and clownish, than to turn immoral. The shy and the bashful Man, is preferable to the bold and the impudent: And not to know the ways of Town, or Court, is better than to learn their Vices.

CLEAND. But altho' this Danger might incline one to think a confined and private Conversation more proper for young Men, than great and general Companies, yet sure

(*e*) Inimica est multorum conversatio. Nemo non aliquod nobis vitium aut commendat, aut imprimit, aut nescientibus allinit. *Sen. Epist.* 7.

there is a Means of enjoying the Advantage of these, without the Danger. Let then Precaution be doubled to secure the Venture, till settled Principles of Virtue have strengthened the Mind. I should therefore think that the Advantages of publick Company may be delayed for a while; since it will be more easy for a young Gentleman to wear off any Excess of Shiness, and to get a Knowledge of the World, than to recover the Infection, if he is once grown up in Vices, as in Years.

EUDOX. With such Precautions as you hint at, it must be owned, that a general Run of Conversation, has great Advantages. It has indeed its Dangers for the Weak, and Inconveniencies for the Wise. Yet to converse with only some particular Sets of Men, will leave one no less imperfect in the Art of Conversation, than to deal with only one sort of Books would leave one very limited in the course of Learning.

CLEAND. Accordingly it is a very odd Figure which they make, who have been used to only one or two Families, or perhaps have contracted their Company to three or four Persons. They may admire themselves, and be admired in their narrow Circle, but will be lost in other Occasions. Or if they venture to say any thing,

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they will be apt to drive into their beaten Road, and talk with others, as they have been used to do with their Fellow-smokers, or Sportsmen. I mean by these, such as make Country-Sports not the mere Amusements, but the great Business of their Lives.

EUDOX. There is a certain Narrowness of Discourse, to which even Men of Wit are confined, unless they take something of an extensive Field of Company. Private Thoughts alone, can hardly suffice to that comprehensive Enlargement of the Mind, which is attained by taking in the different Sentiments, and Notions of other Men. A Confinement too within a few Companions, bounds up the View of several important Truths, and contracts the greatest Means of gaining a Knowledge of Men, and Manners, and Sciences.

CLEAND. As for Sciences, those who confine themselves into such a narrow Compass as we are speaking of, seldom have any Notion of them, and strangely comfort themselves in their Ignorance, by laughing at *Pedantry*. Yet certainly one would chuse to converse with the meekest *Pedant*, rather than with one, who having bid adieu to Books, associates only with a few Neighbours, who have no Thoughts beyond a
Dog,

Dog, or a Horse, or a Pipe and a Bottle; and no Wit beyond Ribaldry and Oaths. I believe you remember *Amatbesius*, who was brought up to Town last Year, and introduced, by the Credit of his Estate, into some of the best Company. But as he is little capable now of receiving any Pleasure from any Strain of Talk, that is not in his own habitual Turn, so he returned Home with a great Contempt of some, who justly bear the Character of fine, polite, and ingenious Company. Yet *Amatbesius* does not want good Sense. But long Confinement to a particular sort of low Conversation, has stiffned him so much, that he cannot think of becoming pliable to any thing better.

EUDOX. Taking a wrong and almost inflexible Bent, is not the only Disadvantage of being confined to a narrow and low Set of Company. Not to make both gross, and ridiculous, and even prejudicial Mistakes upon Occasions, one should be acquainted with the different Humours, Ways and Follies, not to mention the Cheats of the Age. Skill in Men and Manners is requisite, not only to avoid being imposed upon, but also not to give offence, nor become ridiculous. This Skill can hardly be attained but by Observations drawn from

different Sorts of Company. Speculative or slow Remarks are not sufficient, without a quick and practical Discernment upon the Spot, and being able to see through a Veil, and to perceive what lies at the bottom of a mere Pretence. The unexperienced, and those who have seldom been conversant with various Company, are very liable to be cheated with a mere Outsideworth, with the Shew and deceitful Protections of Candor.

CLEAND. But if too much Confidence, and too easy a Dependence upon fair Appearances, is to be avoided, we must not run into over much Suspicion. It is the Wise-Man's Saying, That he, who is ever considering the Winds, will never sow: And we may affirm, that whoever pores too much upon the general Grounds of Caution, will never enter into the true Methods of a friendly sociable Life.

EUPOX. Yet as some little Clouds are pretty sure Signs of a gathering Storm, so there are Marks which immediately point out the Mind, and give one a sufficient Caution against some Men. Very small and insignificant Trifles will some times unravel a long Series of Dissimulation. A sudden and chance Word, will be a sufficient *Index* to a large Roll of Imposture.

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The closest of Men is sometimes out of his Guard. Those Moments are to be observed, and thence the Methods of your Conversation and Caution to be taken. Yet not so as to carry the Matter too far, and to mistake an inconsiderate Word or Action, for a sure Sign of a false Heart, or a depraved Mind. For the very best of Men have some Intervals of Failings.

CLEAND. As a proper Knowledge of the World, and of Men, is scarce to be attained, without entring into a Variety of Companies; so there is scarce any making a great Advantage, or enjoying the full Pleasure of various Company, without having taken a View of most Parts of Learning.

EUDOX. It is the want of that Extent of Knowledge, which often makes Gentlemen shy of entring into Conversation, for fear their Ignorance should appear. Yet I suppose, when Learning is recommended as one of the greatest Qualifications for Conversation, it is not requisite that, in *Geography*, for Example, one should be no less exact, than if he had surveyed the World for a Purchase, or were to regulate a Land-Tax upon it; nor in *Genealogy* to be able to trace the Royal Line up to the Flood; nor be so great a *Metaphysician* as to split

all the Formalities in *Suarez* ; or to have wandered in Divinity Questions through all the Speculations of *Scotus*.

CLEAND. No : But he should have as much Acquaintance with the chief Sciences, as may suffice, if not to give Decisions, at least to take Information ; and to be able to learn something from all occasional Discourses of Moment on Subjects of Learning, and enough at least to secure him from gazing at and admiring every false Pretender to Learning. And thus much may be known by every well-educated and ingenious Gentleman, and be managed beyond all Suspicion of affecting too much the Air of a Scholar.

EUDOX. An Entrance into such a Latitude of Knowledge, strengthens the Mind, and enlarges the Capacity ; and both are improved farther by Discourse. Yet it must be owned, that great Caution is to be had, not to mistake a mere Smattering of many things, for an Extensiveness of Learning. Filling the Head with a confused Number of superficial and indigested Notions, is a very different thing from Extent of Learning.

CLEAND. Nor is less Care to be taken, that where there is really a good Share and Extent of Learning, Men go not out of their
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their Depth. This Vanity of seeming more learned than they really are, often draws them into Blunders and Confusion. Upon the whole, a little Learning is generally, and even a good deal is often a dangerous thing. Many have only just enough to make them ridiculous, and to expose them. I have forgot who it was, but he was much in the Right, who being order'd to take two hundred Men with him to possess himself of such a Post, desired the General to send only half the Number. Being asked why? He answered: Because the whole Number was far from being sufficient to such an Attack, and half the Number was enough to be killed. Thus half the Learning of some People, is enough to be abused; and they want a great deal more to do any thing to the purpose.

EUPHON. It is no less common to meet with Men who, upon this Notion of general Learning, make their Heads mere Lumber-Rooms, or Store-Houses of Exotic pieces of Literature, without any true Taste of its solid and most useful Parts. A Vanity of this Shape cannot fail to be ridiculous, and is often dangerous. Such I count most, if not all of the *Rose-crucian* Tribe; and those who will be tampering with *Agrippa*, or who affect no less a Knowledge

ledge of Hell than *John Wier*, who has marshalled all the Infernal Troops so nicely, that he is sure there are five hundred seventy two Princes, with each ones Name and Surname, besides seven millions, four hundred and five thousand, nine hundred and twenty six subordinate Devils; not to mention many more Particulars of his subordinate Demons.

CLEAND. You cannot I believe have forgot, how *Alogius* came up with a Load of less dangerous, but equally impertinent and troublesome Learning, as he called it. When he has poured out a deal of *Latin*, and *Logick* upon the Company, he admires himself, wondering how well he is furnished for Conversation. He does not reflect that besides something like Learning, and a fluent Tongue, it is moreover requisite to consider Circumstances, to be well-bred, and skilled in the World so far, as to understand the Ways of proper Carriage, and the Measures of Civility in all Occurrences of Time, Place, and Persons.

EUDOX. That is what he has not learnt from his *Farnaby*, and his *Keckerman*. Nor can it indeed be well learnt, but from Observation and Use of good Company. Without this, all the Arts of *Rhetorick* since
Tully,

Tully, and all Philosophy from *Aristotle* down to *Le Grand*, will only make one impertinent and intolerable in Conversation.

CLEAND. Accordingly, how often do such as *Alogius*, prove themselves very Coxcombs in *Barbara*, and silly by the most exact *Schemes* and *Systems*. Under their Management, and want of Breeding, they make it doubtful whether their Folly, or Vanity is greater. Their *School-distinctions* have not taught them the practical Difference between Pedantry and Learning, Wit and Buffoonery; nor how to be plain and frank without Rusticity; or good-natured and civil, without Meanness and Fawning. With a modish Dress, their Air and Ways are unfashionable. All the Taylor's Skill could not fit them out for a genteel Appearance, nor could the Dancing-Master teach their Heads with their Heels. There is in that upper Room, such a Lumber of the Schools, that it warps their whole Comportment, and disfigures their Person so much, that often with a considerable Gracefulness of Face and Shape, when you only see them, you are presently disgusted as soon as you hear them.

EUDOX. I have often, upon such Occasions, thought of the *Devise* of a *Peacock* with this *Motto*, alluding to the horrid
Scream

Scream of that beautiful Bird; *To please, be Silent. Ut placeat, Taceat.* I was something acquainted with the ingenious Author of this *Devise*, which he made of a very handsom but silly young Man. And *Boubours* (f) allows it to be a good one in in the *Burlesque* kind.

CLEAND. Not only a graceful Exterior, but even a worthy Character, is often in a manner lost by impertinent Learning. *Would you know*, says *Martial*, (g) to *Ligurinus*, *why every Body flies you? Alas! you are too much a Poet.* Then he exaggerates (perhaps too much) that Fault of *Ligurinus*, and concludes: *Would you know how fatal a Fault this is? You are a Man of Probity and Worth, and yet you are Dreaded.*

“ *Vis quantum facias mali videre?*

“ *Vir justus, probus, innocens, timeris.*

How often is it thus with Men who have too much Learning about them, and will never lay it aside.

EUDOX. what makes *Alogius* more remarkable in those Faults, is his being fond of having his Cousin *Timander* with him.

(f) In his *maniere de penser.*

(g) In *delectu* Epigr. l. 2. xxvi.

A little Reflection would make him very cautious of appearing so often with one, who by all the Decencies of Behaviour, by his graceful Ways, and by all that can be ornamental and agreeable, makes the contrary Methods be more detested upon the Comparison made at so near a View. To be much with such Persons may be a great Advantage to those who desire and endeavour to improve, but must needs obscure those who are of inferior Talents, and make the Defects of conceited Coxcombs be more observable.

CLEAND. I remember Sir *Hen. Wotton* calls it a Political Caution in *Architecture* not to Build near a great Neighbour. ---- Here is the Place ---- *This were*, says he, *(b) in truth to be as unfortunately seated on Earth, as MERCURY is in the Heavens, for the most part ever in Combustion or Obscurity, under brighter Beams than his own.* The same Caution will be no less politick in those who would fain shine in Company, which they cannot do with Men of superior Talents.

EUDOX. And especially in the peculiar Talents of *Timander* there is something that makes every Affectation and Folly be

(b) Disc. of *Architecture*.

very remarkable in the Comparison, as I have already observed. He is extremely natural and easy in all his Actions. They always fall into a sort of harmonious Order, by a perfect Habit of Good-Breeding. He is equally distant from the least Stiffness of Formality in Words, Motions, and Looks, as from the impolite Roughness of Cast, which is so common to those who have been long accustomed to a Country Life. When his Circumstances called him up to Town, the Place was different, but his Behaviour seemed to be the same, because he adjusted it to the Occasions with the same Ease. He charmed immediately in the politest Company, without any thing of that Care, or that solicitous Watchfulness about every Part of Behaviour, which only serves to make it constrained, and consequently ungraceful. How wretchedly did many of the fine Sparks appear wherever he came? Their little artful Managements of the Cane and Snuff-Box, the golden Tooth-pick and the Diamond Ring, their languishing Eyes and lisping Tongues, how disagreeable did they seem in his Presence? While all his Looks and Actions pleased, it was visible that he gained Peoples Affections, and found the surer Way to their Hearts, by the Command of his own. For
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it is the Prevalence of some ungoverned Passion that mostly makes People disagreeable. They displease others by seeking too much to please themselves.

CLEAND. Give me leave to add, or rather to express more fully what you have hinted at already, that they often displease no less by too great an Endeavour to please. A perpetual Study to be agreeable, seldom fails of a contrary Effect. It is in the Agreeableness of Men, as in that of Paintings. In both there may be an Excess of Care. Nor of Care only, but even of Exactness. Give me leave to turn again to a Place in Sir *Hen. Wotton*, which will explain my Meaning.---- Here he first quotes these Words from *Quintilian* upon antient Artists in Statuary, and the same holds in Painting: "That *Lysippus*, and *Praxitelès* have made the nearest Approach to Truth: For *Demetrius* is therein reprehended as rather exceeding, than deficient; having been a greater Aimer at Likeness, than at Loveliness".---- Hereupon Sir *Henry* adds: "This is that witty Censure of the antient Artizans which *Quintilian* has left us, where the last Character of *Demetrius* does require a little philosophical Examination, how

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“ an Artificer, whose End is the Imitation
 “ of Nature, can be too natural: Which
 “ likewise in our Days was either the Fault,
 “ or, to speak more gently, the too much
 “ Perfection of *Albert Durer*, and perhaps
 “ also of *Mich. Ang. Bonarota*; between
 “ whom I have heard noted by an inge-
 “ nious Artizan, a pretty nice Difference,
 “ that the *German* did too much express,
 “ *that which was*, and the *Italian*, *that*
 “ *which should be*: which severe Imitation
 “ of Nature, by the one in her *commonest*,
 “ and by the other in her *absolute* Forms,
 “ must needs produce in both a kind of
 “ *Rigidity*, and consequently more Na-
 “ turalness than Gracefulness. This is the
 “ Reason why some exact *Symmetrists* have
 “ been blamed for being too true, as
 “ near as I can deliver my Conceit”.
 Thus Sir *Henry*; and thus, I believe, it
 will ever happen in too great and exact a
 Study to please Peoples various Humours.
 Less Exactness in the Aim and Compliance,
 would succeed better.

EUDOX. It is certainly that very Free-
 dom from any thing of the over industrious
 Study to please, that makes *Timander* do it
 so well. And one may say of him what
Dryden does of *Abfalom*.

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*Whate'er he did was done with so much Ease:
In him alone 'twas natural to please.*

CLEAND. Another direct Point of Opposition between *Timander* and *Alogius*, is in the use of Learning. *Alogius* is always endeavouring to pass for a Scholar. *Timander* is soon known to be one, by the Accuracy of all he says; tho' you seldom perceive him to speak by the Book. You find him soon to be a Man of Reading and Study without the least Air of the School-Boy or Pedant.

EUDOX. He moreover perfectly understands himself, without assuming any odious Preference upon the Advantage he has over others. Yet he knows how to take modestly what is offer'd, when due to his Rank or his Merit, which he neither overlooks, nor over-values. A noble generous Assurance bears him up in the best Company; never losing himself in any sort of an awkward Confusion, but proceeding in all Occurrences without any Discomposure or Disorder. His Demeanour is taking, and his Discourse so attractive, that he easily gains both Assent, and Love; while others have such a way of shewing themselves to be in the Right, that they

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lose your Affection, while they convince your Judgment.

CLEAND. In all Occasions, an habitual Disposition of Mind not to offend, and even to oblige, is what secures *Timander* from shewing the least Contempt, or Disrespect, or Neglect of any one in the Company, and consequently secures him the Love and Esteem of every Body, by the most amiable of social Virtues. His Country has left a *Northern* Roughness upon his *Accent* in Speaking, but nothing of it in his ways of conversing. With a just and becoming, and therefore neither a servile nor a mean Deference to Tempers and Humours, he seems pliant to all, and yet is always himself.

EUDOX. But as he is always inoffensive, so no where more admirably than even in Raillery. With all the Pleasantness of various Images and unexpected Turns of Wit and Language, he is so inviolably true to the great Rule of Civility, *never to make any one in the Company uneasy*, that the very Person upon whom his Raillery turns, is of all others the most pleased. For his way is not to set off Peoples Faults, Defects, or Miscarriages in burlesque Colours, but fixing upon what really has something Com-
mend-

mendable in itself, he softly touches upon what seems to have an Oddness in it : but in so genteel a manner, that it has all the Humour of Raillery, and all the Art of Praise.

CLEAND. That Talent of his, has often surprized me. For it is of so nice and ticklish a Nature, that it is hardly to be found so perfect in any one else, and few can attempt it without Danger. It requires not only a nice Wit, but still a nicer Judgment in the Distinction of Humours and Persons. For some are so dull as to be provoked, even by their Praises, for want of Quickness to take the right Sense of an indirect Commendation, and think themselves picquantly injured while they are ingeniously praised.

EUDOX. Add to this, another Talent which *Timander* possesses in an equal degree. I mean that of *contradicting* without displeasing. His Complaisance does not make him allow of all Reasonings and Stories that are vented in his Company. He often opposes them with great Freedom. But then he rectifies the Mistake in so fine, so obliging a manner, that one has the Advantage of Information, without the common Uneasiness of Correction.

CLEAND. How very different is his Management in this regard, from that Spirit of Contradiction which so strangely possesses some People? They oppose every thing, and bluntly too, for the mere ill-natured Pleasure of Strife and Contention. Several bring the wrangling Humour from School-Disputes, and all they seem to have learned there, is to be of any Opinion but that which is advanced by others. Whereupon they generally turn Conversation into mere Noise and Jar, and the Dispute is to be ended, not by the Edge of Wit, but of the Sword; which is the greatest Sharpness they are masters of.

EUDOX. Nothing seems to cloud these bright Parts of *Timander*, unless perhaps something of excessive Ceremony in Occasions of obliging one to accept some Preference of Place, where one can hardly admit of it without Confusion. But this I perceived, when last we had him in Town, he has much moderated. As indeed it was strange that so nice a Judge of the just *Medium* in other things, should have some while transgressed in this.

CLEAND. But by that Pacquet of Letters which your Servant has just brought up, I am sensible I should transgress both
against

Dialog. I. of GENTLEMEN. 31

against good Manners and Friendship, by staying any longer with you at present. I know the Hand, and that it is upon an Affair that requires Dispatch ; and therefore, Sir, Adieu.

EUDOX. Adieu, *Cleander*. But I shall expect you about this Time to Morrow.

CLEAND. Without fail.



THE



THE
CONVERSATION
OF
GENTLEMEN.

DIALOGUE II.

BETWEEN
EUDOXUS and *CLEANDER.*

EUDOXUS.



WELCOME, *Cleander*. And I can welcome you with an agreeable Account, that *Ti-mander* will be in Town within three Weeks. For, with his Service to you, he desires me to assure you of it, in a Letter, or rather a Note which he

he inclosed in the Pacquet you saw brought to me Yesterday. He accidentally called at my Correspondent's, just as the Letters were sending away.

CLEAND. I need not tell you how glad I am to hear of his Return.

EUDOX. We seemed Yesterday to take mutually a great deal of Pleasure in talking of him. What will it be to converse with him? I am glad of so strong an Argument as his Merit, to second my Desire of your continuing in Town to enjoy his Company. But since I am not to deceive you, I must let you know that besides *Alogius*, there are some others, no less disagreeable, whom you will not be able to avoid upon some Occasions of *Timander's* Company.

CLEAND. Alas, Sir, I am too sensible it is the sad Fate of such fine Gentlemen, to be troubled with Coxcombs following them. And as *Timander* has it not in his Nature to shake such Creatures off with any thing like Rudeness, so it will happen that some are too silly, and unreflecting, to be otherwise kept at a Distance.

EUDOX. One of this Kind, who frequently pursues *Timander*, is *Antimachus*, a young Man of Quality, lately come from the University. One might pardon him several of his other very troublesome Methods,

thods, if a Habit of disputing, and Eagerness for Reputation of Wit and Scholarship, had not almost ruined in him the Hereditary Good-breeding which has long been remarkable in his Family. He even loses it to a great Degree of down-right ill Manners, in frequently interrupting others who are speaking, and in watching Occasions to contradict and correct.

CLEAND. It is so obvious that such Interruptions are a plain Declaration that one is tired with hearing others talk any longer, or vain enough to think one has something better deserving the Company's Attention, that one would wonder so impertinent a Fault is not more easily avoided. Including a Disesteem of others, and visible Marks of Self-conceit, it cannot fail to be highly offensive.

EUDOX. Different Opinions, and a reasonable Liberty of declaring them, is necessary to enliven Conversation, and to improve by it. Yet Opposition of Sentiments is so nice a thing, that it must be softened with all imaginable Lenitives of Civility. The positive Tone, the magisterial Air, the censorious Mien, the critical and the captious Humour must not appear; but the contemptuous Way of dissenting is intollerable.

CLEAND.

CLEAND. After a fair and silent Hearing, the Opposition may be entered, provided it has nothing of those other Qualities, nor of their natural Signs: Such as a loud, or clamorous raising of the Voice, a slighting Gesture, the pitting Shake of the Head, and Shrug of the Shoulders, a wandring or sleering Look. When to these is added a rising from the Chair, a striking the Table, and edging by Degrees nearer to him you oppose, one cannot but think the Matter is coming from a Debate, to a Quarrel. Neither Civility, nor Reason stand with so much Heat; and the improper Warmth of Dispute is generally a Sign that better Arguments are wanting.

EUDOX. One cannot but observe with Concern, that such Heats are unhappily most common, where they are most improper. I mean in *Controversies* of Religion. As there can be no solid Religion without Humility and Charity, so there is no persuading it with Pride and Haughtiness, or Wrangling. Where the way of arguing is impetuous, it will be made a point of Honour to be stiff, and where your Passion appears, Truth will either not appear, or not be owned. The Importance of the Matter requires Zeal, but Zeal must be distinguished from Heat; nor will

will you ever convince Men of their Errors by a Contempt of their Persons, or their Arguments. And I believe it will be found upon Reflection, that the best way to convince another, is modestly to shew what Reasons have prevailed with yourself, rather than to seem any thing peremptory that they must immediately convince others. It is true that what solidly convinces one, ought to have the same Force upon another. But unless Care be taken not to give any Signs as if you thought your own Judgment a right Standard of every Body's Reason, they will be apt to stand out for fear of seeming to submit to your Superiority of Genius, if they yield to the Truth, while you seem to propose it as their Judge.

CLEAND. Whoever thus appears to act the Judge, and superciliously to require Assent, or to wonder his Adversary is not persuaded, may be sure he will seldom meet with Assent. An Antagonist will rarely grant a Conviction, where he thinks it cannot be done without an Acknowledgment of being inferior in Wit and Judgment. The great Art is therefore, in Disputes that arise, so to propose your Reasons, that the Person, with whom you argue, may not seem to be forced into, but to enter into your Reasons, while you propose them in a way
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that looks rather to be no more than explaining what he knew before, tho' he did not reflect upon it so distinctly, till Conversation raised it into a more lively Idea.

EUDOX. But alas! the interrupting and contradicting Gentleman, of whom I was speaking, is quite a Stranger to such soft and insinuating ways of leading People into his Opinions. He fancies himself a great Master at Reasoning well, and at Speaking handsomly. He thinks, that his *German* Schemes of Rhetorical Figures, have formed him to persuasive Eloquence, and his Tables of *Predicables* and *Predicaments*, to close Reasoning. I am far from a general Contempt of those Methods of Learning: But it is a Folly to think they will do the Work of Reason, in the ways they are often brought from the University into polite Company. Unless they are drawn off from the Dregs of School-Disputes, and all affected splitting of *Formalities*, they will set one into the most useless and disagreeable ways of Discourse. They help to ground one in a close way of Reasoning, when rightly used: But they turn to a meer fallacious and displeasing Abuse of Words, if the *Formalities* of them are not removed out of Sight.

CLEAND. Methinks those artificial links and twists of Discourse, are like the Ropes
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and Wires, without which we know that *Machines* in a *Theatre* cannot move; yet if they appear, the Pleasure of the Spectacle is lost, or even becomes ridiculous. And it may be said with a good deal of Truth, however it may sound like a kind of a Paradox; that there are few things in the World more different, than a Scholastick Reasoner, and a Man of Reason.

EUDOX. Of this there is another, and perhaps a stronger Instance than *Antimachus*. Several thought *Asopius* had impaired his Reason by studying *Latin*, and had quite lost it when he ventured at *Greek*. But when he got to Philosophy, it was found by an Increase of his Folly, that he had, till then, some Remains of Sense. He is now desperately gone. It is his Custom, after he has taken in a Load of *Dialectical* Lumber, to come and discharge it in Discourse, and endeavour thus to ease his overburthen'd Head, by filling the Company's Ears with a horrid Din of scholastick Jingle. Then immediately he runs to his Chamber to lay in a new Provision, that his Folly may not always appear to be the same, tho' it is always equally ridiculous.

CLEAND. I know not how it happens, but what we call chopping of *Logick*, has proved fatal to several. They come to such

such a Pass, that one would think they had vowed rather to say any thing, than talk common Sense; or be of any Opinion, rather than want a Dispute. This jarring Humour grows up very soon with some, and possesses them so strongly that they never recover. They call in Question the most received Opinions, and will scarce let the clearest Principle pass without a Debate. Empty Words, mistaken Terms of Art, and Abundance of Noise immediately follow, with a Ring of *Entbymems*, *Syllogisms*, *Dilemmas*, and a Number of Distinctions. These, they think, have a very speculative Air, and look like Sharpness of Sense and Reason. Above all, they will needs have you think them prodigious subtle, because they often use *Reduplicative* Terms. Then, if you seem to admire them, they will carry you on with a pretended *Sorites*, and rattle away with such *Metaphysical* Whimsies, that there is no imagining what they would be at. They soon lose both you and themselves in their *first and second Intentions*, at such a rate, that you would despair of their ever vouchsafing to descend into common Sense again.

EUDOX. It is indeed incredible how soon some young Philosophers, imagining they have gained the Repute of being very

speculative Heads, begin to outrun their Reason, to maintain the Repute of a subtle Genius. It looks as if nothing less than seeming near akin to *Aristotle* would satisfy their Ambition. I wish they would all agree to form a Colony and transmigrate to *Stagyria*.

CLEAND. Perhaps the fond Ambition of being thought great *Aristotelians*, is partly the Reason why they affect so impenetrable an Obscurity, that as many Commentators as have lost, or spent their time in explaining *Aristotle*, would never clear their Meaning. I met with an Author some while ago (but have forgot his Name) who will not compound for fewer upon that Philosopher, than twelve thousand at least. But indeed, as for these *Philosophasters*, of whom we are speaking, they frequently have no Meaning at all. Nor truly am I, in this Case alone, but in most others; very apt to suspect, there is no Meaning, or only a very imperfect one, when the Expressions are confused and obscure. And therefore, both in writing and speaking, I would generally have that Axiom of Law take place, which supposes things which are not *apparent*, are not *existent*. Why therefore must we suppose there is Sense, where none appears?

EUDOX.

EUDOX. And yet, it so happens, that some People have the luck to be admired the more, the less they are understood. Nor is it very rare to meet with those, who are wonderfully pleased when they meet with a puzzling Author. Three or four thousand are said to have written upon the *Philosophers Stone*, and most of them unintelligible. Even themselves own they are not to be understood, but by the *Adepts*. Yet such obscure Writers are some Peoples favourite Authors.

CLEAND. Do they then judge of Wits, as of Rivers, that the darkest are the deepest? Or are they of the Nature, which an Author attributes to a sort of Fish in the *Sicilian Sea*, which swim away from those who speak the Language of the Coast, but let themselves be taken by those, who talk any unknown Tongue? However this may be, those spurious *Aristotelians*, we are speaking of, are a Proof of an old Saying: That no Absurdity is so great, but there is a Head to be found with empty Room enough to receive it: And that, as they have not Wit enough to speak extraordinary Sense, and too much Vanity to talk common Sense, they e'en talk none at all. But tho' only pretended *Aristotelians* have been named, yet it is no less true, that

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Malbranche, and *Locke* have sent out a proportionable Number of Wanderers in such Mazes, as are quite out of all the Roads of true Reason.

EUDOX. I believe you think an Affectation of remote Erudition, equals these philosophical Follies. The Difference certainly is not great: For, to what Purpose can it be, to seem resolved in Company, and in whatever Company, to pass for a *Sigonius*, or a *Lipsius* in *Roman Antiquities*? How few will care for a Calculation of how many square Feet of Stone might be in the *Capitol*; or how many Loads of Sand in the *Circus*? Or how rarely will any of the Company, they generally meet, care to be taught the *Merovingical* Characters, or other *Diplomatical* Surmizes of *Mabillion*? How few will bear with one, that will needs be teaching them to distinguish *Clodoveus's* Hand from that of *Dagobert*?

CLEAND. It is in Effect strange to observe, into what impertinent Trifles some of your *Antiquarians*, and Pretenders to Erudition fondly run. One of this Stamp is pleasantly enough described by *Gellius* (i). The Man profer'd him a large Volume full, said he, of wonderful Curiosi-

(i) *Noct. Attic. lib. 14. cap. 6.*

ties; as, what was the Name of the first Grammarian; why *Telemachus*, when he had a mind to wake *Pisistratus*, did not do it with his Hand, but with his Foot; and the like Nicities. Yet have I known some, who would be strangely fond of such Discoveries, and highly delighted if they could tell, as *Juvenal* expresses it, how many Pitchers of Wine *Alcestes* gave to the *Trojans* (k).

Quot Siculus Phrygibus vini donaverit urnas.

EUDOX. But let the Learning be of what kind soever, and in itself never so important, it is extremely ridiculous to be forcing it unseasonably upon all Company, or drawing it in as it were by Force of Arms. *Crassus*, who speaks so finely in *Cicero's Books de Oratore*, declares, that of all Absurdities (which are innumerable) he knows no greater than of those, who will be nicely arguing upon Subjects either very difficult, or very insignificant, in all Places and all Companies (l). Even History,

(k) *Sat.* 7. v. 255.

(l) *Lib.* 2. *Sub initium.*

Omnium autem ineptiarum, quæ sunt innumerabiles, haud scio an ulla sit major quam illorum, qui solent, quocunque in loco, quoscunque inter homines visum est, de rebus aut difficillimis, aut non necessariis, argutissime disputare.

which otherwise is extremely delightful, grows insipid, when drag'd in upon every, or no Occasion; and where a short Touch of it might be very pleasing, large Historical Excursions would be impertinent, and very disagreeable.

CLEAND. Thus I remember a Gentleman once, when the Discourse was upon a great Prince, mentioned very properly the Character of *Theodoric*. Had he been content to have stopt there, we should have been much pleased. But he ruined all by immediately hurrying away into wild Excursions of the *Goths* and *Vandals*, the *Quadi*, *Heruli*, and *Huns*; and frightened us almost as much with their Names, as the World was formerly with their Arms. He should have spared us the Terrors of his *Genferic* and *Alaric*, his *Attila* and *Totila*, and have reserved them for some more desperate Occasion; as to fright some huge Pedant into some tolerable Degree of Sense.

EUDOX. Few are more subject to this Folly, of shewing more Erudition than the Circumstances require, or even allow, than *Polymanthus*. We were speaking at Table of a Lady who understands *Latin*, without understanding herself the worse for it. Immediately *Polymanthus* appeared charmed, not with the Character of so sensible a Lady,
but

but with the Opportunity of giving the Company the Names of learned Women; and telling us, that great was the Learning of *Sapho*, *Cornelia*, *Afrania*, *Cornificia*, *Proba*, *Valeria*, and others who may be seen in *Perrot's Catalogue*. I wonder he did not tell us of the Man in *Marville* (m) who had collected an Account of four hundred Works, written by Women. Soon after, one being mentioned, whose Merit had exposed him to Envy (having first cleared his Voice with a judicious *Hem*) Yes, says he, I have observed in the *Course of my Reading* (that is his usual Phrase) that Men of Parts have been subject to be envied; and that, whereas insignificant Persons live quiet in their Obscurity, great Men have been much plagued with Adversaries. Then Hemming again, *thus*, continued he, *Socrates* was persecuted by *Aristophanes*, *Pythagoras* by *Cydon*, *Pindar* by *Amphimanes*, *Simonides* by *Timocreon*; and you may be sure he did not forget to set *Zoïlus* upon *Homer*, and *Bavius* upon *Virgil*: Adding an *etcetera*; for he protested he would not tire the Company. Alas! he had done it already.

(m) *Mélanges* 2. Vol.

CLEAND. Among these may be placed the Humour of such as are always thrusting into Discourse just what they read last, and who seem to read with no other Design, but upon telling it immediately. You soon perceive they are upon the Watch, ready to lay hold of the least Appearance of Connexion to bring it up. *Celia* was but just mentioned yesterday, as very unaffected in her Dress: Pray, Gentlemen says *Morander*, now you talk of Ladies Dresses, did you ever observe how clearly *Juvenal* speaks of *Fontanges*. It is in his *sixth* Satyr.

*Tot premit ordinibus, tot adhuc compagibus altum
Ædificat caput -----*

To this he added, that *Plotina's* Medals shew plainly, that those Dresses are no late Invention. Then he looked round to be applauded. But the Company smiled: For unluckily one hearing that *Morander* was coming, had told us: Now, my Life for it, we shall hear some News of *Fontanges* from *Juvenal*, and *Plotina*: For I was with him this Morning, and I found him reading the *Valesiana*, in the very Place where they speak of those Dresses.

EUDOX. Yet certainly the wrong Methods of such Men, is no Proof but that
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ones Reading may very commendably be designed for the carrying on, not only of learned Conversation, but also as an agreeable Ornament to the most familiar Discourses. It must indeed be used with great Caution and Reserve. No Eagerness must appear of one resolved to make the Subject of your last Reading be that of your next Discourse. Any thing of that kind is putid, unless it be so managed that it may seem rather to come in of its own accord, than to be drawn in by Force, or by premeditated Endeavour.

CLEAND. The Absurdity appears particularly shocking, when the pretended Erudition thus drag'd in, is only some insignificant and trifling Criticism. Thus *Morander*, because one in the Company had an Occasion to enquire, how such a Gentleman's Name was spelt, immediately observed, that the *Orthography* of proper Names was a difficult Point; and confirmed it by adding from the same uncited *Valesiana*, that Authors are not agreed, whether it should be *Sicamber*, or *Sigamber*; but that, for his Part, he had rather say *Sygambros* than *Sigumbros*. How far better is it to say nothing, than such Impertinencies?

EUDOX. Even History, as I was observing before, tho', when properly managed,
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it is so agreeable an Ornament of Conversation, must be carefully used, not to displease. It is often so ill applied by many, that while they shew a great Memory, they betray their little Judgment. Others only make it appear, that all their Reading has only given them a confused Idea of History, without being able to give a handsome Account even of the chief Particulars. Some again run into the tedious length of *Narrative*, which is so common with those *Story-tellers*, who please Children, but plague Men.

CLEAND. Nothing could be more insufferable in this kind than *Macroleptus*. He was afraid of nothing so much in a Story, as of making it short. He drew every thing into such a Length, by insisting upon a Number of insignificant Circumstances, that he was sure to tire the Company with a Passage, which a reasonable Man would have dispatched in twenty Words. Not content with real Particulars, he would add several that could not be known. Thus he had a favourite Story of two Friends, who venturing into a Boat without Skill enough to manage it, got out of Sight, and out of all possibility of calling for Help. There they disagreed about the Conduct of the Boat to gain the Shore.

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At length, quarrelling and scuffling, they both fell into the Sea, and were lost. Here we hoped he had done. But he had a deal to add of the Year, the Month, the Day, the Weather, the Nature and Situation of the Coast, &c. Finding him thus unmercifully disposed to tire us quite out, I told him: That he might perhaps be well assured of those Particulars, but I was at a loss to know, which of the two unfortunate Friends came back to tell him all the whole Series of their Dispute, and their last Words at falling into the Sea, which he had related so very circumstantially. He was discomposed at the Question. But it saved us from his farther prating at that Time; and had so good an Effect, that for a good while after, he never told a Story in my Presence.

EUDOX. Sometimes there is, in too profound and over-wise historical Observations in Company, no less a Folly, than in those trifling Circumstances. One of the most pardonable Puns in *Fuller* (more pardonable than most of his own making) is that which he relates, of a wise Man to a great one (n) *Read Histories, that you do not become a History.* But then it must be remember'd, that such Reading must not

(n) In his *Worthies*, p. 4.

consist in merely observing the Narration, but in pondering the Causes and Motives of Actions, particularly in the Revolutions of great States, and the Rise or Fall of great Men. Yet these are to be entered into, by way of Conversation, with such Moderation, as not to be guilty of the Folly (than which none can be more ridiculous) of those politick Pretenders, who seem fond of resembling a *Tacitus*, or a *Machiavel*.

CLEAND. Methinks one that would frame his Remarks upon Sir *William Temple's* Observations upon the *Netherlands*, could hardly chuse a more proper Method, either for his private Improvement, or for Discourse. You will be apt to tell me, that few are capable of coming near to so good a Model. For I know you agree with the Author of those *Memoirs of Ambassadors*, who says, Sir *William Temple* has made himself unimitable by his Excellency in that Kind.

EUDOX. Besides his natural Wit, and his acquired Learning, he was employed in *Holland* in very nice Occasions, and with its ablest Ministers; with whom perhaps he was too intimate. However, these concurrent Circumstances gave him great Opportunities, beyond most Men; especially those who must make their Remarks

marks from the Relations or Accounts of others. But infine, without hoping to equal him, that is certainly a very proper Book to give one an Idea of such Remarks upon Histories and States, as may be suited to a prudent and agreeable Conversation, by a right Mixture of the narrative and instructive Part. Nor are his *Miscellany Essays* perhaps less commendable towards framing fit Notions for a Gentleman-like Use of Learning in Conversation.

CLEAND. Reading of Voyages too, may be of great Use for Discourse. But unfortunately Readers of such Books often fail in distinguishing the Trash and Defects, from the real Advantages and Beauties of such Works.

EUDOX. Thus have I more than once seen it happen; for instance, in Mr. Addison's Voyage. While his Remarks upon Places spoken of by the antient Poets were overlooked, nothing was taken notice of but his weak and improper Reflections upon the Church of Rome. But that Gentleman who writes so finely, when he keeps within his proper Sphere, where he chances to wander out of it, is rather to be pitied than censured. In the generality of *Voyage-Writers*, there is commonly a great number of Trifles to be met with. The

Levity of a rambling Genius often appears in the Nature of their Observations. But when a Man of true Genius for several things, runs out of his true Character, to shew how unfit he is to meddle with other Matters, it is the Reader's Business, to blush for him, or at least not to join with his Mistakes in repeating them.

CLEAND. We have too, a common Proverb to caution us against an easy Belief of Travellers. But when their Remarks betray a Prejudice or Passion, what Credit can they expect? However, as judicious Travels are a great Source of proper Materials for agreeable Conversation, so the less perfect of the kind may be of some Use.

EUDOX. Even the *Scaligerana*, the *Tbuana*, the *Patiniana*, and most of those *Ana's*, may be a Help. Yet most of them consist of a Heap of such Trifles as are not tolerable. Nay they are made up of so strange a *Rhapsody*, that one might often suspect, they were designed to disgrace the Persons, to whom they are attributed. Take the *Scaligerana*, for example. What can they be more apt to make one think, than that he now and then said a tolerable thing, and often very silly ones. The Insolence with which he is there said to
speak

ſpeak of the Holy Fathers, and other great Men, muſt needs make him paſs for a very ſtrange one. And ſeveral other things, therein attributed to him, are ſo very unaccountably weak and abſurd, that it is hard to imagine they were collected by a friendly Hand.

CLEAND. Yet many curious Particularities may be picked out of ſuch Books. But it muſt indeed be owned, that it will require a great deal of Care, to judge what may be depended upon in ſuch Heaps of Errors, and odd Sayings. And I believe you muſt have obſerved, that moſt of thoſe who deal much in ſuch Books, and ſuch other piece-meal Scraps of Erudition, are very ſuperficial.

EUDOX. Yes, Sir, it is what I have frequently obſerved, and have therefore warned ſome of my young Acquaintance, to guard againſt a Fondneſs they ſeem to have for ſuch Books. The Variety of Matter whereof they conſiſt, the Freedom and Liberty of the Touches, the Mixture of hiſtorical Hints, and what ſome are fond of under the Name of *Anecdotes*, is what makes ſuch Books be amuſing to ſeveral. And the rather, becauſe that kind of Reading requires as little Attention, as the things themſelves have little Con-

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tion.

tion. But certainly it is a sort of Reading by no means proper for young and undiscerning Heads. It naturally leads them to a loose and random way of thinking, and talking. It may furnish them with some Hints which may enter agreeably enough in Conversation, if rightly managed. But such Hints are apt to lead them into great Mistakes. For not being thoroughly acquainted with the Subjects they pick up in those loose Gleanings (and how should they from such slight and confused Mixtures) they will frequently be misguided into great, and even ridiculous Errors.

CLEAND. My Lord Bacon makes no difficulty to call *Epitomes* no better than *the Corruption and Moths of History*. And see here, Sir, what he adds: (c) “The Use of them deserves to be banished, as all Men of sound Judgment have confessed; as those that have fretted and corroded the sound Bodies of many excellent Histories, and wrought them into base and unprofitable dregs”. If such was his Opinion of *Epitomes* of Histories, what would he have said of such Books as those we are speaking of? For they mostly

(c) *Advancement of Learning*, B. II.

consist of what we may call the Dregs, the Crudities, and the Indigestions of learned Men.

EUDOX. Daily Experience convinces me, that such Works are not only very apt (as we have already observed) to give young Minds a mere superficial turn, and to cast them into an incoherent way of thinking, and consequently of conversing, but also inclines them to watch for any slight Hint, to bring in the little Scraps of Erudition, which have struck their Fancy in such Writings. And what is thus industriously brought in, can hardly please.

CLEAND. Much of the same Reasons have convinced me, that near to those *Ana's* may be placed those Books which are entitled *Merry Jest's, Pleasant Stories, Ingenious Puns, Witty Sayings &c.* A real Witticism often proves a Folly at Second-hand. Nor will there perhaps be ever found any duller Companions, than those who deal much in such Collections of Mirth.

EUDOX. I have been told of one (p) who had gathered a large Note-Book from such Works with such additional Pieces of Merriment and Wit, as he had heard in

(p) I think it was *Fleckno*.

Company, This he called *Wit's-pincushion*. So quaint a Title is an *Innuendo* of the Man's Genius. Here, said he, in this Book, I stick all the sharp Points of Wit and Mirth that occur, and have them ready to pluck out for Use. By this means he became most industriously insipid. Nor is there perhaps a surer Method to be so.

CLEAND. It is the Fate which generally attends such *Pedlars of Ingenuity*, or such *Wit-brokers*. For it commonly requires almost as much Wit to use an ingenious Point well, as to have been the first Author of it. And I may insist upon it again, that perhaps of all Reading, none is less proper to fit a Man for Conversation. Especially if we reflect, that such things are apt to draw young People into a great Mistake. For such Collections habituate them so to what strikes the Fancy with Flashes of Wit, and Levities of Mirth, as to take them from minding what is judicious and solid. Nor have I ever known above one or two Persons of real Wit, who gave themselves the trouble of reading, or making such Collections of Wit and Mirth. There is moreover in most modern Collections of that kind, such a Mixture of Prophaneness, Smut, and wretched Punning, as makes for
hore

horrid and dull a Medly, that a Man of Sense can hardly endure them.

EUDOX. Even antient *Apothegms* are so blended with Trifles, that it may be much doubted whether the Authors who have gathered them, can be thought to have done the World any great Service. I remember my Lord *Bacon* says, That most of them have been unhappy in their Choice. How far more fortunate he has been in the like Attempt, let others judge. But I may venture to say in general, that it is often with several antient Sayings, as with some Bodies dug up many Ages after Burying. Some few retain a Solidity: Others appeared like solid Bodies, but moulder'd away at the first Touch, when they were brought into the open Air. *Mabillon* says, (q) That when *Childeric* the *Second's* Body was found with that of his Queen, and of *Dagsbert* his Son, the Queen's Bones turned to Ashes at the Touch. Thus while some antient Sayings have Solidity enough to bear Examination, others have not.

CLEAND. And truly it is a strange Mistake, to imagine there must needs be

(q) See *Memoirs of Trevoux*, August, 1702.

something very fine in Sayings, related to have been uttered many hundred Years since. Let Antiquity have a due Veneration. But must that Respect be given to every thing past? Is not the Respect sometimes too universal, and carried too far? Even the Faults of our Ancestors, and their Follies, are sometimes admired, as if to be well done, or wisely said; and to be done, or said a long while ago, were synonymous. Every Exclamation against present Times, is by some People constantly enhanced with high Admiration of the past. As if all *hereafter* must needs be worse, because others have gone *before*. By this wise Measure, none can be so tall, because not so old as their Fathers. The wisest of Men however, has declared it is a *foolish Question* (r) to ask why past Times were better than the present.

EUDOX. I have often considered whence it is, that Men generally entertain great Ideas of past Times, and I believe they have in great measure given the true Reason, who attribute it to that Vanity of Historians, which has made them unfaithful in their Accounts of Antiquity. For remote Antiquity being naturally followed by Obscurity and Oblivion, and Writers

(r) *Ecclef.* vii. 11.

imagining it would be attributed to their Ignorance, and make a disgraceful Gap in their Works, to pass over whole Ages in Silence, What do they do? They supply by Fiction, the Want of real Facts. Then (besides that the Heat of Imagination naturally carries beyond Realities) persuading themselves that a noble Beginning will give a lustre to their following History, they enter upon it with the vastest Ideas they can frame, and give us as many *Heroes* as Men. At length advancing nearer to known Times, Truth begins to take place of Fiction, and the Actions of Men to be related as they were in themselves, not as it pleased the Writer's Invention. Thus past Transactions are only greater, because more fabulous. Were Antiquity less obscure, it would appear less admirable; and it happens in historical Objects quite contrary to what it does in Objects of the Eye. These appear less, those bigger by Distance. Or, if you please, it is with them as with Objects that seem bigger in a misty Morning. Thus a great Part of *Heroick Times* are swelled with the Vapours of mere *Romantick* Greatness.

CLEAND. And thus too a great many antient Sayings, appear great to several, because they view them through the Vapours

pours of that vast Admiration they have preconceived of the Persons to whom those Sayings have been attributed. Those Philosophers and *Sages* of old Days, are represented as vastly Wise. Hence many, for the Credit of their own Wisdom, think they must find something wonderful in what they are told was said so long ago, by Men of so great a Name. Had the same thing been only said To-day, it would have been forgot To-morrow, or we should laugh to hear it repeated for notable Wisdom or Wit.

EUDOX. At least, to judge by many of the antient *Apothegms*, as they are called, one may conclude, it was more easy for Writers to feign great and *Heroic* Actions, than wise and witty Sayings; since those are so numerous, and these so rare. Unless perhaps one might make here an Application of, or rather reverse an odd Reflection of Mr. *Osborne*. “ *Cæsar*, though in
 “ this happy, says he, (s) that he had
 “ a Pen able to grave into neat Language,
 “ what his Sword had roughly cut out,
 “ may, in my Judgment, abuse his Reader.
 “ For he that for the Honour of his
 “ Wit, does make People speak better,

(s) Edition of 1673. pag. 6.

“ than

“ than can be supposed Men so barba-
 “ rously bred were able, may possibly re-
 “ port they fought worse than really they
 “ did”. Begging this Gentleman’s Par-
 don, I cannot think such a Speculation as
 this can be sufficient to suspect the Veracity
 of *Cæsar*. His Credit is too well esta-
 blished, not only by his remarkable Mo-
 desty in speaking of himself, and all the
 Marks of Truth which can be seen in the
 way of an Author’s writing, but he had
 too many Witnesses of his Wars, and too
 many emulous of his Glory, to hope he
 could either raise or maintain it by forged
 Actions. But this I only observe by the
 Bye. What made me read you that Passage
 of *Osborne*, was, with regard to the Point
 we were upon, to ask if one may not ra-
 ther suppose that those, who to add to the
 Grandeur of their Histories, have made
 their *Heroes* do greater things than Men
 can well be supposed to have done, have
 not rather made their *Sages* speak worse
 than they really did? Might not this pos-
 sibly happen, either because, as I have al-
 ready hinted, it was more easy to feign *He-
 roic* Actions, than wise Sayings; or because
 they were more willing to yield to the Anti-
 ents a Preference in such *Heroism*, than in
 Wisdom, and in Wit? For it often happens
 G that

that Men, who despair of passing for *Heroes*, would fain pass for as wise and witty as their Ancestors. But I easily give up such Reflections as these, as being perhaps rather two far-fetched. This at least one may venture to affirm, that it is more credible, that Men barbarously bred should speak as *Cæsar* makes them, than that such wise Men, as those Antients are represented to have been, should speak no better than they are often said to have done in many of the *Apothegms*, as they are called in the Collections, of which we are speaking. For Men, tho' barbarously educated, have often a great deal of good Sense and Wit by Nature ; and in several of the pretended *Apothegms*, there appears but little.

CLEAND. So very little indeed, that sure it would be unjust to frame thence a Character of the Antients. If they had been no more distinguished in other things, than in several of the *Apothegms*, they must have been very ordinary Men. Since therefore they stand recorded among the most Eminent, it is reasonable to suppose, that many of their best Sayings having been lost, following Writers have either father'd weak ones upon them, to make up a Number, or made them weak by their imperfect Accounts. A great deal too must be

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be attributed to Distance of Time, and Difference of Circumstances, in which their Sayings now appear. Many are the things, which have a good Turn in the very Occasion of being first said, which will seem to be very indifferent, when repeated in other Circumstances. Thus, you see, I am more equitable to the Antients, than you have sometimes thought me.

EUDOX. A Reflection too of my Lord Bacon, may be here applied. Upon observing that some nobler Contemplations of Philosophy have been lost in the Current, as it were, of vulgar Opinions; Thus *in time, says he, as in a River, while weighty and solid things sink and are lost, light ones, like Straws and Weeds, swim at the Top, and are brought down to us in the Stream.* (t) However, as many things, in such Collections as we are speaking of, have well deserved to be transmitted down to Posterity; so they may be of great Use in Conversation, when they are judiciously chosen, and properly introduced.

CLEAND. Much the like may be said of *Epigrams, Inscriptions, and Epitaphs,*

¹⁰
(t) Adeo ut tempus, tanquam fluvius, levia & inflata ad nos devexerit; gravia & solida demerserit. *Instaurat. Prefatio.*

as to the Use of them in Conversation. But unfortunately those who deal most in such Collections, often betray the Levity of their Genius, by repeating those of the loose, the prophane, or the burlesque Kind ; rather than those of the grave, and noble Sort.

EUDOX. Thus I lately heard one select from *Sannazarius* some of the wretchedly sinutty, or punning *Epigrams*, to adorn his Discourse ; and never take any notice (tho' the Occasion of that Poet being named, might well have brought it to his Mind) of that, for which the Senate of *Venice* honoured him with a considerable Purse of Gold. You know I mean that, wherein he speaks of that noble City.

CLEAND. I have formerly seen that *Epigram*, but not remembring it perfectly, should be glad to hear it again.

EUDOX. It is in these fine, and noble Poetical Lines.

*Viderat Hadriacis Venetam Neptunus in undis
Stare Urbem, et toti ponere jura mari :
Nunc mihi Tarpeias quantumvis Jupiter Arces
Objice, et illa Tui Mœnia Martis, ait.
Si Pelago Tibrim præfers, Urbem aspice
utramque.
Illam homines dices, hanc posuisse Deos.*

'Midst

'Midst Hadria's Billows while with wond'ring
Eyes

Neptune beheld Majestic Venice rise,
And stand confest the Ruler of the Main :
Now boast, said he, great Jove! your Rome
in vain.

If you prefer the Tiber to the Sea,
View both the Cities : you'll be forc'd to say :
Your Mars's Walls, and your Tarpeian Tow'rs
Were rais'd by Human, These by Heav'nly
Pow'rs.

CLEAND. Since you have met with one
so little capable of chusing well from *San-*
nazarius, you will not wonder that *Moran-*
der should be so mazed with the volumi-
nous Heap of the Monuments of *Italy* by
Schradereus, as to over-look the few good
ones in that vast and tedious Collection.
Almost the only one I have heard him men-
tion (and he is so fond of the Delicacy, as
to repeat it often) is that of a *German*, who
killed himself with hard drinking.

Vina dedere neci Germanum, vina sepulchro
Funde. Sitim nondum finiit atra dies.

Pour Wine upon my Tomb. Tho' here I lie,
Because I drank too much; yet still I'm dry.

Had *Morander* reserved this drunken Piece of Poetry for some of his Pot-Companions, it might have done well. But to bring it into learned Company as an ingenious Piece, betrayed the low Genius of the Man.

EUDOX. But 'sure he never repeated it more improperly, than lately, where I was; and just after one, who has a very fine Taste of polite Wit, had alledged from *Schraderus* this Epitaph upon *Cotta*.

Sperabas tibi culta novum Verona Catullum.

Experta es duros, bis viduata, Deos.

Nulla animum posthac spes erigat, optima quando

Prima rapit celeri Parca inimica manu.

Quæ tamen ut vidit morientis frigida Cottæ

Ora, suum fassa est crimen, & erubuit.

You hop'd, polite Verona, but in vain,

T'enjoy Catullus' Muse reviv'd again.

From this untimely second Stroke of Fate,

Learn now, at least, to be no more elate

By flatt'ring Hopes, since thus you see the best

Are soonest still by Atropos oppress'd.

Yet even she, beholding Cotta dead,

Blush'd at her Crime, and turn'd away her Head.

This

This *Epitaph*, which was made by *Sannazarius*, is a neat one in the Spirit of Poetry; tho' sure it stands better in a Book of *Epigrams*, than, as *Scbraderus* says it does, in the Cathedral Church of *Verona*.

CLEAND. I have more than once observed, that the Wits of those Days seemed more solicitous to preserve the Spirit of Poetry, than that of Christianity, in the *Epitaphs* they made. As for *Cotta*, whom *Sannazarius* thus compares to *Catullus*, I do not remember to have seen any Verses of his making.

EUDOX. Nor do I remember to have met with any of him, but an *Epitaph* he made upon a beautiful Youth.

*Me longè effigie venustiore
Narcissi vel Apollinis comati,
Parcarum Lachesis nimis severa
Isti Quinterium dedit sepulchro.
Cur non flosculus exeam requiris,
Cum tantum fuerim puer decorus?
Tellus est nimium arida, O viator!
Nostri facta perustione amoris.
Sed si lachrymulis tuis madescet
Forsan flos novus ibit è sepulchro.*

*In vain I was Quinterius the fair:
Less fair Narcissus, and Apollo were.*

By

*By th'unrelenting Sisters cruel Doom
Here lie the tender Beauties of my Bloom.
Now if you think it a surprizing thing,
From so much Beauty why no Flowers spring;
Observe the Ground, and you will easily see
'Tis too much parch'd with ardent Love of Me.
Let it be moistned by your weeping Eyes,
And then perhaps you'll see new Flowers rise.*

How far this comes up to the Turns of *Catullus*, let others judge. It is more to the Subject we are upon, to observe how necessary it is to be very careful in managing right, and making a proper use of such things in Conversation.

CLEAND. Most certainly it cannot be too carefully remembered, that if what is quoted from such Collections is low and mean, it discovers a want of Genius and Taste; if it is fine in itself, but improperly introduced, it betrays a want of Judgment. And if one is found to be upon the watch, to lay immediate hold of a Word, to draw in some Epigram, or historical Passage that has struck his Fancy, he may be sure this will take off a great deal from the Agreeableness of what he thus relates, and much more from the Opinion he would gain from the Company.

EUDOX.

EUDOX. Especially if one and the same thing is thus often drag'd in. Poor *Atopius* has made himself very ridiculous in this kind, with a Passage he has got of Cardinal *Wolsey*. *Fuller* (u) relates that a Fortune-teller had warned the Cardinal to be ware of *Kingston*. Upon this Prediction, he always after avoided passing through *Kingston* upon *Thames*; and was struck to the Heart when he found himself committed to the Custody of Sir *Anthony Kingston*. However singular this may be, yet it is ridiculous to find *Atopius* constantly upon the watch to thrust it in, whenever the least mention is made of *Fortune-telling*. This has made him (if you will excuse the Appearance of a Pun) pass for no Conjuror at *Story-telling*.

CLEAND. Such Persons should at least collect Stories, which, from some common and obvious Words, may afford them easy Opportunities of shewing their Memory and Reading. It was in this View that *Aprobrianus*, with very great and wise Care, had provided from the same *Fuller* (w) a Passage of Mr. *Tavernour*. This *High-Sheriff* of *Oxfordshire*, would needs turn *Gospeller*. In a Sermon, wherein he, no doubt, did edify

(u) *Ecclesiast. Hist.* B. V. (w) *Ibid.* B. IX.
the

the Godly most exceedingly, he told them, “ I have brought you some fine Biscuits, “ baked in the Oven of Charity ; carefully “ conserved for the Chickens of the Church, “ the Sparrows of the Spirit, and the sweet “ Swallows of Salvation.” Here is a Passage to which frequent Occurrences must open him a plain Way. A Chicken, a Sparrow, or Swallow could not long fail to be seen ; and then he was sure to have you in for his fine Story. He has several other Oddnesses in his Conversation, which make me always glad of any Occasion to leave him, as I am always sorry to leave you : But now must do it, to dispatch a Commission for our Friend *Critomachus*.

EUDOX. Pray when do you expect him : For I think the Time he fixt, is out.

CLEAND. He will be with me To-morrow, or next Day at farthest. I forgot to tell you, that he complains in his last Letter, of the little good Company he has met with in his Absence, and therefore hastens up.

EUDOX. He always was more nice in point of Company, than he formerly was in point of Style. Tho’, in the main, so easy in both, as to grant considerable Allowances both to Companions, and to Authors. At his Arrival, I foresee, that as we are entered
into

into this Subject of Conversation, we shall likely continue it in farther Remarks upon its proper Accuracy; as we did upon Accuracy of Style, before he went down into the Country. I long to see him.

CLEAND. You may depend upon my coming with him very soon.



THE



THE
CONVERSATION
OF
GENTLEMEN.

DIALOGUE III.

BETWEEN
CRITOMACHUS, EUDOXUS,
and *CLEANDER.*

CRITOMACHUS.



It is with singular Pleasure, *Eudoxus*, that I embrace you now after a long Absence. Very different Company from yours and *Cleander's*, has made me extremely desirous to enter again into that friendly, easy, and instructive Way of Conversation.

versation, which I have often enjoyed with you both.

EUDOX. You cannot but be too well convinced that the Pleasure we take in your Company is reciprocal, to expect any ceremonious Return of the Compliment.

CLEAND. For my Part, waving all appearance of so needless things as Ceremonies are between such Friends, scarce was *Critomachus* arrived at my House, but I gave him an Account of our late Discourses.

CRITOM. And I can assure you both, that partly the several Dissatisfactions I have met with, and partly the Change you have wrought in me with regard to Style, have made me not so averse, as formerly I was, from thinking nice Rules are requisite in Conversation, and Style. Writing is a sort of Conversing. There is consequently a proportionable Accuracy to be observed in both. But while I complain of the Company I met with in the Country, you will easily suppose there are some Persons whom I except. Especially *Charisius*, in whose charming Seat, and more charming Company, I spent three Weeks with the greatest Satisfaction.

EUDOX. It seems he has almost finished his Seat to his Mind. And as I am acquainted with his elegant Taste in other
H things,

things, I easily imagine he has shewed it in the Beauties of his House, and Garden.

CRITOM. He tells me, you have both promised to go down thither next Summer; and has engaged me to join you.

CLEAND. It is what we fully design. I know not what unlucky Stars (to speak in the Phrase of *Uranus*) have detained us hitherto from waiting upon him in the Country.

CRITOM. You may be assured, you will find there the same Man, you have so justly admired in Town. As to his Seat, I will not enter into Particulars; having no talent at such Descriptions. I will only tell you, that his Fountain is framed upon the Idea he took from some Verses, which I understand, you shewed him here, *Eudoxus*, in your Library.

EUDOX. I suppose they are these in the Inscription of a Fountain with a Statue of *Arethusa*, at *Pietra Bianca* near *Naples*.

*Quæ modo Tyrrhenas inter celeberrima nymphas,
Et prior ante alias formâ Arethusa fui,
Proh dolor! ingelidos, dum flagro, versa liquores,
Narcissi ingrati duritie hic lachrymo.
Haud procul his surgens substructo fornice terris,
Chratidis ad Magni nobile labor opus.*

Hic

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*Hic mihi de conchis posuit fulgentibus Antrum,
Naiadum propter, Nereïdumque domos.
Hujus ego æternum, tanto pro munere, Nomen
Quàm possum blando murmure testor aque.*

*Fair Arethusa, and in vain, Alas!
Fairest of all Tyrhenian Nymphs I was.
But when th' ungrateful Youth contemn'd my
Flames,
Weeping I turn'd to gelid crystal Streams,
And wand'ring mourn'd: 'till pitying my Fate,
Great Chratis led me to this charming Seat.
Here shining Pebbles stud the mossy Ground,
And beauteous Shells adorn my Grotto round.
Here by his gen'rous Hand a Queen I reign,
Naiads and Nereids waiting in my Train.
Here, in return, I'll ever roll my Stream,
In soft and grateful Murmurs of his Name.*

CRITOM. I see these must be the Verses,
from which he took the Plan of his Foun-
tain. The Workmanship, particularly of the
chief Statue, is thought by good Judges, to
be a masterly Piece. *Philotechnus* upon
viewing it, immediately applied to it these
Verses of *Tasso* of the Figures in *Armida's*
Palace. (x)

(x) Canto XVI. Stan. 2.

*Manca il parlar : Di vivo altro non chiedi.
Ne manca questo ancor, S' a gli occhi credi.*

*Speech only's wanting to conclude they live:
Nor even that, if you your Eyes believe.*

CLEAND. I have some Acquaintance with *Philotechnus*, and admire him the more for not affecting, as many do, to pass for skilful Judges in such things, by undervaluing every thing done at Home. *Philoxenus*, who is otherwise a fine Gentleman, is hardly pardonable in this affected Prejudice of scarce allowing any thing of that kind to be nice, that is done on this side of the *Alps*.

CRITOM. I must do *Philoxenus* the justice to assure you I have found him of late, come very much off from that excessive Fondness of all such foreign Performances, and an Affectation, no less unjust than unnatural, of undervaluing those of our own Country.

CLEAND. I am very glad to hear it. For it was a great pity so fine a Gentleman should have been so faulty in that regard, when first he returned from his Travels.

CRITOM. I can speak more particularly of his Change, because I was pretty often with him in the Country ; his Seat not being far from the Place where my Affairs detained

tained me. His Conversation was my greatest Relief in the Company I met with thereabouts.

EUDOX. Sure you will here again except some of the learned Gentlemen of the University, not far from that Neighbourhood.

CRITOM. It must be owned, that some of them are no less agreeable than learned. But several of them have very much confirm'd me in an Opinion I had long since, that however requisite Reading is to compleat a Man for Conversation, it is no more the immense, than the trifling Reader, that makes an agreeable Companion. The vast Reader often brings from it a strange Moroseness of Temper; or the Vanity of imagining he is vastly learned, because he has turn'd over a great number of Books. Yet as all Vanity makes Men disagreeable, so there is often a great Difference between a bookish Man, and a learned Man.

EUDOX. Not even an *Alexandrian* Library, with great Leisure and Assiduity to rummage in it, would make some deserve to be called learned. I mean that Collection of Books at *Alexandria*, which how immense it was, I leave you to guess from this Instance given by Dr. Friend. (y) “ For,

(y) In his *History of Physick*.

“ says he, when Orders came to have the
 “ Books destroyed, they were distributed
 “ throughout all the City, among those
 “ who kept *Bagnios*, of which then (*Anno*
 “ 640) there were no fewer than four thou-
 “ sand ; and yet notwithstanding all the
 “ Havock one may suppose was made, it
 “ took up six Months to consume them”.
 Now it is very likely that some Men, from
 such vast Numbers of Books, would conti-
 nue very illiterate, and would learn little
 more by reading them, than if they had been
 employed in burning them.

CLEAND. In Effect, from many who
 read much, how little do you find they
 know ? When a Book is mention'd, they
 can tell you they have read it. But you
 must expect no farther Account from them,
 unless perhaps they can tell you whether it
 is a *Quarto* or *Octavo*, an *Aldus*, a *Plan-*
tin, or an *Elzevir*.

CRITOM. Such Readers as these often
 grow fond of having read every thing. Nor
 is it every one, who, when plainly found to
 have pretended to more than he really has
 ever read, can reply so readily as *Gelasius*
 did, even to his Prince. A Book being
 mentioned at Court, *Gelasius* immediately
 said he had read it, and commended it
 much for a fine Pocket-book. Being told
 by

by the King himself, that it was a *Quarto*, the undaunted Reader answered: *May it please your Majesty, I mean a Surtout Pocket-book.*

CLEAND. Another Sort of great Readers draw little from their Authors but minute Trifles or Points of small Moment. Such a Man, upon talking of *Philip of Macedon*, shall very nicely observe to you, that he was lame; and this shall be his only, or his chief Remark upon that Prince. If you could inform him of which Leg he halted, you would make an important Addition to this Reader's Notes. Much greater will he take this Observation to be, than if you told him any of that Prince's wisest Actions, or or Sayings. Let it be mentioned in Conversation, that when this King *Philip* was urged to banish one who spoke ill of him, refused to do it, saying: *'Tis better he should talk so of me, where we are both known, than where one of us may be unknown.* Let it be added, that my Lord *Bacon* commends the Wisdom of this Saying: Such a wise Reader shall drop it, to tell you he has read, that *Philip of Macedon* was lame, tho' he has forgot by what Accident it happen'd, but will try to find it out when he returns to his Books.

EUDOX.

EUDOX. The ingenious *Bartoli* (z) compares the Genius of such Readers to the attractive Force (begging the modern Philosophers Leave to call it *Attraction*) of Amber, which only draws Hairs and small Straws. He farther adds, that some from Flowers take only a pleasing, but passing Smell or Sight; or perhaps a Nofegay, or a Design for colouring, or Parcels for distilling; while the Bee draws from a Variety of Flowers, Hony of a sweet and uniform Taste. Thus, says he, from Books, which are like Gardens for the Pleasure and Improvement of Wit, some take only the pleasing View or transient Smell, or fading Garlands, and short-lived Ornaments; others pick up their Notes in Bundles, huddling all they read into a confused Collection, turning little of their Reading into an uniform and useful Substance of Learning.

CRITOM. Of such Men we may say, that as the three thousand Gods of *Hesiod*, and the three hundred different *Jupiters* of *Varro*, do not prove that the Heathens were very religious; so that Multitude of Authors which some affect to read, neither proves nor makes them learned.

(z) In his *Huomo di lettere*. § *Selva*.

CLEAND. Frequently too, vast Reading and a Multiplicity of Learning, fills Mens Heads with a great Confusion of Notions. And this makes them more unfit for Conversation, than others are, tho' much their Inferiors in Extent of Learning.

CRITOM. The nice Critick *Boubours* (and I am well reconciled to such Criticks) commends *Costar* as a Writer, who is *happy in Comparisons*. One or two of the Comparisons which he thus approves, are very fit to our present Purpose. Here is the Place. (a) "As the best Countries are
 " not always the most beautiful for the
 " Pleasure of walking ; so the most fertile
 " Wits for great Thoughts, are not always the most agreeable for Diversion in
 " conversing : And to excel in Conversation one should be like those rich Men
 " who have their Estate in ready Mony, in
 " having a wonderful Presence of Imagination and Memory, which furnishes with
 " no less Readiness than Abundance, both
 " Things and Words." In this Idea, how many are there whose Reading and Learning is like embroiled Estates ; large in themselves, but so encumber'd that the clear Income is very small ?

(a) *Pensées Ingenieuses.*

EUDOX.

EUDOX. It will seem less strange that some great Readers prove no good Company, if we reflect how frequently it has happen'd, that even very good Writers are very indifferent Speakers. It is said (*b*) that *Fracastorius*, *Sigonius*, *De Thou*, *Rigault*, and *Saumaïse*, with all their Skill in writing *Latin*, had no Facility in speaking it; and that *Manutius* (*c*) who writes it so well, could hardly speak three Words of it together.

CRITOM. Possibly some of these rather would not, than could not speak it. As I have been told (*d*) that *Famianus Starda*, used to avoid speaking *Latin*, for fear that some want of Accuracy, which is so hardly to be avoided in talking, might, by a Habit thus contracted, slip into his Style in writing.

CLEAND. It may then be easily supposed that Cardinal *Bembo* who is reported (*e*) to have valued his *Latin* Pen so much, that he said: He would not give it for the Dukedoms of *Mantua*, and *Modena*, might be cautious of spoiling his Style by talking that Language. But I hope it is not true, that he left off saying his *Breviary*, and reading the *Bible*, not to taint his *Latin*. Such

(*b*) In the *Batiniana*.

(*c*) In the *Scaligerana*.

(*d*) By one long conversant with several of the learnedest Men in *Rome*.

(*e*) By *Teiffier* in his *Eloges des hommes Sçavans*.

Precautions have too much of the Irreligious, as of too *Pedantick* Fears.

CRITOM. Such ridiculously *Pedantick* Fears, cannot however be generally the Reason why some, even in their Native Tongue, tho' they write very well, yet speak very indifferently. It rather proceeds often from a Genius not so quick, as to keep Pace with a current Conversation. Some, otherwise great Men, require Leisure of Thought, and the Slowness of the Pen to adjust their Notions, and their Words. Even some of the *French*, tho' celebrated Writers, and tho' of a Nation so naturally inclined, and in their Language so fitted for easy and fluent Talk, had either no Inclination, or no Talent for it: As *Corneille*, and *Fontaine* are said, (*f*) to have been Men of very little Conversation.

EUDOX. Among us, that is more frequent. Our famous *Butler*, tho' the turn of his *Hudibras*, would incline one to think him a Man of very quick, ready, and pleasant Company, is often said to have been far otherwise. Yet I have been assur'd by one well acquainted with him, that he was one of excellent Company among his intimate Acquaintance, or when enlivened

(*f*) By *Marville* in his *Mélanges*, Vol. II.

by a Bottle. This spirited him up to break through the diffident Bashfulness, or whatever it was, that gave otherwise a sort of Heaviness to the whole Air of his Countenance, and even to what he said.

CLEAND. It is also sometimes reported, that the great *Dryden* was not a Man of ready Conversation. But several of his Replies and Reparties in Company, are strong Instances of the contrary. Those were much convinced of it, who teized him with importune Commendations of the seven Bishops, who were sent to the *Tower*, and fondly called *the seven golden Candlesticks*. For he readily replied: That when their seven golden Candlesticks were sent to the *Tower* to be tried, five of them proved to be *Prince's-Metal*. This sharp Allusion to those Bishops going in to the Prince of *Orange*, after all their solemn and repeated Protestations of Fidelity to King *James*, silenced those, who forced Mr. *Dryden* upon it: And several more of his Replies shew, that when he pleased, he could be as ready and witty in Company, as in his Writings.

EUDOX. But I presume, *Cleander*, you will allow me here to suppose, that you do not imagine either Wit in general, or that sort of Wit which makes a conversable Man, is to be judged of by some sudden Replies,

Replies. My Lord Bacon (for whom you have very justly a great Deference) says, (g) *That to be good at a Reply, but not at a continued Discourse, is a Sign of Shallow-ness and Weakness: As we see, continues his Lordship, in Beasts, those that are weakest in the Course, are yet nimblest in the Turn, as it is betwixt the Greyhound and the Hare.*

CLEAND. No doubt it often happens, that such Men, as we are speaking of, seem little conversable, not for want of what to say, but because not in an Humour to talk. Sometimes they are too much bent upon Study; other times they do not think the Company proper; often, not finding the Occasion calls for Wit, they are judged to be indifferent Company, for not being witty out of Time.

CRITOM. Nor is it fair and equitable to expect always some remarkable Wit from such Men; or to judge of them by what they may appear to be in *Coffee-houses*, or in a numerous mixt Company. In more private Conversation they are often very different, and no less agreeable, easy, and witty in some Occasions, than they shew themselves judicious by their Reservedness

(g) In his Essay of Discourse.

in others. Perhaps too, it is an excessive Bashfulness that makes them rather silent in such Companies, and sparing of their Words.

EUDOX. Sir *Henry Wotton*, speaking (*b*) of *Bembo* the ninety first *Doge* of *Venice*, says: “ He gave to Embassadors small Satisfaction, save with his Eyes, which
“ were very gracious and kind. In his
“ Countenance otherwise there was an
“ invincible Weakness; always blushing
“ while he spoke, and glad when he had
“ done. Whereby his Answers were scant
“ and meagre.” Something of this kind often is the Reason why, in mixt Companies, Men of Wit shew but little of it, or to little Advantage. Sir *Henry* adds: “ But
“ this did imitate Wisdom. For a Duke
“ of *Venice* that opens himself much, will
“ be chidden.” And one may say of noted Men, that often it looks like Wisdom, to speak little in mixt Companies, where they are likely to be much observed, and liable to be censured by Criticks.

CRITOM. 'Tis good, however (to use an Expression of my Lord *Bacon*, if I remember right) *that a Man's Face give his Tongue leave to speak.* And it is a Pity,

(*b*) In his Discourse of the Election of a *Doge*.

that

that an excessive Bashfulness should make ingenious Men lose a great Part of that Advantage, which Nature has given them in point of Wit. On the other Hand, it is also a Pity, that some should bear the Character of being Men of a free, easy, and good Company, while their only, or chief Talent, is Boldness.

CLEAND. That same great Man (i) here puts the Question: Why *Action*, which, says he, is but superficial, should be placed as the chief Part of an Orator; and he gives this Answer: "The Reason is plain; " there is in human Nature, generally more " of the Fool, than of the Wise; and therefore those Faculties, by which the foolish " part of Mens Minds is taken, are most " potent".

EUDOX. Much of this Reason will explain, why it often happens, that Men of Confidence in Conversation, pass so well with many, by virtue of their Boldness, and not only with Approbation, but also with Applause; tho' they have very little of any true Talents. On the contrary, while the weaker, which is generally the most numerous Part of Company, are imposed upon by Confidence, Men of true Sense

(i) Essay on Boldness.

are doubly displeased to see such an Excess of Boldness so unjustly assumed, and so undeservedly applauded, where there is little of any true Merit.

CLEAND. But still there is a moderate Assurance which Men of Sense and Spirit maintain in Company, even of those who are above them in Quality. They speak with such a Possession of themselves, and of what they say; such a becoming Liberty, mixt with a due Regard to all Degrees, as to be admired by all. This Assurance is a Part of Good-breeding, while too sheepish a sort of Bashfulness is a Kind of *Rusticity*. Yet of the two Extremes, this is the less displeasing; and People have often a Concern for those, who are over bashful in Company: While they are glad to see such Men meet with Reproof, as mistake a bold Confidence for a just Assurance.

CRITOM. It was a fine Reply, and Reproach of this kind, which was given to one, who was over-confident, while some were under Examination concerning the treasonable Projects of *Scribonianus*. Among several of his over-bold Speeches in the Emperor's Presence, he asked one of the Prisoners, *And what would you have done, if Scribonianus had been Emperor?* The Prisoner answered: *Why truly, Sir, I*
would

would have stood quietly behind his Majesty's Chair, without saying a Word.

EUDOX. In Effect a just Distance between too much Confidence, and too great a Diffidence, is one of the nicest Points in Accuracy of Conversation. The one will carry a Man too far; the other will leave him short of the true Point. St. *Evremont*, speaking of his own Nation, says: There is none where good Sense is more rare, but that it is no where more exquisite, than when you meet with it among the *French*. The Freedom of the first Part of what he here affirms, might incline one to think him impartial in the second. How far it will be thought true in general, let others determine. But one may venture to say, it will be hard to find any where more agreeable Conversation, than among the *French*. That Easiness and Civility of Behaviour, with that Life, and Gayness, which is so common among them, is a great Help to make their Company very pleasing. Nothing can be more so, than where a happy Mixture of Prudence allays all Excess of Vivacity and Confidence. Where these predominate in them, I would rather chuse my Company from the heaviest of the *Northern* Climates.

CRITOM. Yet we must not think it will be just, to run away with a general Prejudice against the *French* Vivacity and Assurance, and call them universally by the harsh Names of Levity, and Impudence. Let us first consider also, if we have not as much too great a Share of the *Saturnine*, as they of the *Mercurial* Temper; and how far the same St. *Evremont* may be right in saying: That generally no Conversation, would be more agreeable than that of the *French*, if they would speak a little less; and that of the *English*, if they would speak a little more than commonly they do.

CLEAND. And truly as to what here regards the *Taciturnity*, in which we *English* are thought to exceed, we must own, that whatever shew of Prudence there may be in Reservedness of talking, it often is the Effect, not of Wisdom, but of a morose and suspicious Humour. It is a Saying of my Lord *Bacon* (and I own, I willingly appeal often to his Judgment) That *the Man who is over-silent, either suspects others, or himself.* (k) He is either suspicious of his own Capacity and Good-will, or of that of others. Partly conscious of his own Ill-

(k) *Quilibet, aut alios habet suspectos, aut suspectus est ipse sibi.* In his *Antitheta*.

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nature, in commonly taking the Words of others in the worst Way, he judges by his own Disposition, that others will do so by him ; or suspecting his own Capacity in speaking properly, he doubts others will neither hear, nor understand him favourably.

CRITOM. The best is, never to be over-conceited, nor too apprehensive ; neither judging too well of ourselves, nor too ill of others. Yet it may well be granted, that most commonly we shall mistake less by inclining more to Silence, than to Talkativeness. Let us then fear ourselves so far, as not to be led into an Excess, by too favourable a Conceit of our own Talent for Discourse ; tho' not so far, as to be over-silent, for fear of others. In a Word, some are too silent in Company for fear of such Failures as are almost unavoidable : others, because never silent, run into such Faults as are not supportable.

EUDOX. The Regard we ought to have, both to ourselves and others, should also keep us, not only from excessive Confidence, but from being too precipitous in our Talk. We shall otherways often hurry into such Mistakes, as will be a Confusion to ourselves, and our Friends ; and expose us to the Censure, and Displeasure of others. But by avoiding precipitous Talk, it is not
meant

meant, that we must be upon the Study, and drag out our Words with a pensive, tedious Slowness. Ordinary Conversation will seldom allow much Time for Reflection upon every Word. It often calls for a quick Reply. A slow one will often come too late to have any Grace.

CLEAND. It will also be often found, that another of my Lord *Bacon's* Sayings is very true: That *Thoughts* (like Water) are *best in the Stream*. (1) Standing Waters corrupt, or grow muddy. A Current keeps them clear and good. Thus by too much thinking, Mens Thoughts often become less sound, or obscure at least. They would roll off clearer and better, in the Run of Conversation.

CRITOM. Yet *it is more advisable* (as the same great Man says, if I remember right) *that your Silence should make you be thought ignorant, than that your Talking should shew you are so*. It is no Shame to be ignorant in some things, but it is always one to be over-pretending in any Point. And it is generally the Half-learned who are too eager to seem universal Scholars. Those who are most learned, are commonly more bent upon farther Enquiries, than upon shew-

(1) *Cogitationes in profuente Sanissima*. In his *Antitheta*.

ing what they know. And again it is observable that the Half-learned are generally aiming to shew their Scholarship, by endeavouring to ridicule the Ignorance of others.

CLEAND. Give me leave here to take notice, that one of the surest Marks of these Pretenders, is their Readiness in bolting out their unjust Exclamations upon what they call very contemptuously, but very weakly, *Monkish Ignorance*. It is not long since I had an Occasion to tell one of this Stamp, who just before had been quoting something from *Naudé*, that he would do well to remember, what that Author says of *Monks* with regard to their Learning. Here is the Place I referred to. “ It were, says he, “ (m) Ingratitude to make so slight an Acknowledgement of the Obligation we owe them for the Preservation of Letters, from the Times of *Boëtius*, *Symmachus*, and *Cassiodorus*, to the last taking of *Constantinople*. At which Time Learning crept out of Monasteries, which for all the Time before, had been as it were, publick Schools, where, not only Youth, but also such Men as would apply themselves that

(m) In his *History of Magick Eng. Edit. of 1657. pag. 225.*

“ Way,

“ Way, were instructed in all Manner of
 “ Discipline, Sciences, and Morality ”.

EUDOX. And upon this Occasion I cannot but observe, that lately reading *Nicholson's* Historical Library, it seemed to me, among many of his other Faults, very strange he should often be so wildly, and ungratefully railling at *Monkish* Ignorance ; while it is very visible, how despicably small his Library would be, but for their Works.

CRITOM. Believe me, Gentlemen, I am much recovered from several Prejudices, I formerly had, against *Monasticks*. Particularly I have a good while since been convinced, how ridiculous it is in the *Petty-Foggers* at Learning, to charge them so inconsiderately with a general Character of Ignorance. You would be persuaded of my Equity to *Monasteries*, both with regard to Piety, and Learning, particularly in *England*, if you were to see, how carefully I have noted, and approved of an Extract to that purpose, from a *MS.* of Mr. *Ephraim Udal*.
 (n) But that would lead us too far into other Points.

CLEAND. There has indeed been now and then a Man of Wit, and of some Learn-

(n) It is remarkable, and cited in the *History of Taxes.* pag. 182.

ing, led unadvisedly into that ungrounded Cant of *Monkish* Ignorance. But in the main, it may be fixt for a standing Rule, and which seldom fails; that whenever you find a Man very ready in his Sneers of that Kind, you are fallen into the Company of a false Pretender to Learning, or of a wretched Pedant.

EUDOX. The Mention of this Species of *Pedants*, and what has been said of learned Conversation, may well mind us however, to lay in a *Caveat* against an odd Sort of Gentlemen, who would cloak their own Ignorance, by endeavouring to fix the Name of *Pedantry* upon any thing of learned Conversation. If by a *Pedant* is meant one, who has fill'd his Head with insignificant Trifles of Grammar, with frivolous Pieces of Antiquity, with little odd, and whimsical Scraps of Reading, and a meer *Ragmanroll* of some things, which he calls *Litterature*, and is visibly labouring to thrust them upon all Companies; it is to be readily granted that such a Man must needs be very disagreeable, and ridiculous.

CLEAND. Yet even such a Plague of a Trifler as this, is less troublesome than one, who has nothing to talk of, but a Horse and a Dog, a Woodcock and a Fox.

CRITOM.

CRITOM. How many such have I met with, during my Stay in the Country? If you were talking of the most important Affairs of the Nation, or of the greatest Men in History, they would interrupt you with the notable Exploits of some famous Hunter or Shooter. What can be more stupid, or more unbecoming a rational Creature?

CLEAND. Not that Gentlemen, who delight in such Sports, should be debarred ever speaking of them; but that they should be sensible how much it is beneath a Man, to make those the perpetual Subjects of their Conversation.

CRITOM. Because a Fox carried a Man endways for twenty Miles, must the Chace never have an end in his Discourse for twenty Years after? Because he killed a glorious Number of Birds last Season, must he murder over again both them and the Company, every Day after, till the Year brings a new Flight?

CLEAND. No Pedantry of the Schools, can equal what, in this Case, I would call the *Pedantry of the Dog-Kennel, and Stables*. If Spaniels, Pointers, and Hounds could speak, they would be ashamed to be always speaking of Foxes, Partridges, and Woodcocks. Nor can I imagine, why it should
be

be more ridiculous in a Scholar, to be unreasonably talking of *Cæsar* and *Pompey*; than for one of those other Pedants, to be importunately prating of his *Ringwood*, or his *Bay-Mare*.

EUDOX. I believe you will grant, that to any of the now mention'd Pedants, there is another Sort very equal, or rather superior. I mean those Men (if they are to be called Men) whose Discourse may, upon your Hint, be called *Beau-Pedantry*. History, or the State of *Europe*, or of their own Nation, *Classicks* or other Books, is what they know nothing of. Some Pieces of a whining *Romance*, some Airs of an *Opera*, or of the silliest Parts of a *Play*, is their chief Learning, next to their Skill in a *Flanders* Lace, and a *French* Brocade. While they are upon these profound Topicks, they are in very suitable Actions. For, all the while; these pretty Fellows are casting their Face into a Smile, or a smirking Air, or adjusting their Wigs and Ruffles, or smoothing their Eye-brows, or stroking their Chin or Lips, or infine, playing with their Ring, Cane, or Snuff-box.

CLEAND. One of these Creatures enter'd lately, where I chanced to be, and was scarce well seated, when he began to lisp out something of *Desdemona*; then viewing himself

in a Glass, cried out with great *Pathos*,
Lard ! how consumedly is my Wig disorder'd
with only crassing the Street. While we were
 all apprehensive of being farther troubled
 with his impertinent Fopperies, a pleasant
 Gentleman told him : *Truly, Sir, at ano-*
ther time we may pity Desdemona, and the
grievous Disorder of your Wig ; but at pre-
sent we are upon the Grievances of the Na-
tion. Happily for us, the *Beau* was displeased,
 and went off to call for a Barber.

EUPHON. Some of those finical Men will
 be setting up for Wits. In this Mistake,
 when they imagine they have been so lucky,
 as to stumble upon a new Conceit, they
 only spoil some old one ; and are them-
 selves a greater Jest, than any they pretend
 either to make or to repeat. For Wit is
 no less entirely out of their Way, than
 Sense.

CRITON. And here, in general, it will
 perhaps be found true (however it may
 sound like a Paradox) That nothing is more
 apt to make Men intolerable Company,
 than to set up for Men of witty Conversa-
 tion. You soon find them out by their nib-
 bling at a Pun or Quibble, and their being
 not only the first, but generally the only
 Persons, who laugh at their imaginary Con-
 ceits. The *Oxford Jests*, and two or three
 more

more such Books, are the main Body of their Library. But if they chance to have sufficient Genius to strike out now and then into a Pun of their own Invention, you will soon perceive they are as highly satisfied with themselves, as they are displeasing to others.

CLEAND. It is well too, if they do not give Smut and Prophaneness, for Wit and Jest; and sling out Curses and Oaths, for excellent Conceits.

EUDOX. Even speaking of some, who have a Share of real Wit, it must be owned, that unless they manage it right, nothing will be more improper in Conversation. Nor indeed is any thing farther from true Wit, than what is often mistaken for it. Many of those things, which are flung out for Witticisms, only serve to shew a want of Judgment.

CRITOM. There is in *Nicholson's Book*, which you was mentioning (o) a just Remark upon *Fuller's strange Ecclesiastical History*, which may be here applied. It is in these Lines. "Through the whole he is
" so full of his own Wit, that he does not
" seem to have minded what he was about.
" If a pretty Story comes in his way, that

(o) *Historical Library.*

“ affords Scope for Clinch and Dröll, off
 “ it goes with all the Gaiety of the Stage,
 “ without staying to enquire, whether it
 “ have any Foundation in Truth, or not”.
 This wild sort of Wit-chace, which leads so
 extravagantly out of the Way, is little bet-
 ter in grave Company and serious Subjects,
 than in a Writer of History.

EUDOX. And again, that Expression of
 the Gaiety of the Stage, brings to my
 Mind a Reflection, which has frequently oc-
 curred to me from what Mr. *Congreve* says
 upon Humour. For methinks, Wit in Con-
 versation is as often mistaken, as Humour on
 the Stage. “ When a Poet, *says Mr. Con-*
 “ *greve*, (p) brings a Character on the
 “ Stage committing a thousand Absurdities,
 “ and talking Impertinencies, roaring aloud,
 “ and laughing immoderately on every, or
 “ rather on no Occasion, this is called a
 “ Character of Humour”. And how often
 is a good deal of this called Wit in Conver-
 sation ?

CLEAND. One even meets several, who
 by the meer Strength of excellent Lungs,
 and a very sonorous Voice, persuade them-
 selves, and others too, that they are most
 facetious Men, and excellent Company. Nay

(p) In his Letter upon *HUMOUR*.

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tho' *Catullus* has made it as current, as it is a true Saying, that,

Risu inepto res ineptior nulla est :

And how frequently soever it is observed, that few things have a worse grace, than silly, immoderate, and unseasonable Laughter ; yet how often is it affected as a witty thing ?

EUDOX. Others, no less silly, laugh not so much to shew their Wit, as to shew the Beauty of their Teeth. They put me in mind of a Saying, which caused a good deal of smiling in the Parliament-House. A noted Speaker being in his complaining Strain, one who replied to him, begg'd leave to mention, that he had been acquainted with a Lady, who upon every little Jog of a Coach would scream out most sadly ; not for Fear, but because she thought she screamed with the greatest Grace of any Lady in *England*. The Application was easy, and pat, and failed not of a pleasant Effect. Nor will it bear a less ready Application to many of the laughing Tribe.

CRITOM. There are other Sorts of mistaken Wit, still more to be avoided. Give me leave to explain my Meaning by a farther Observation of Mr. *Congreve*, in the same Place I was reading to you. " Some-

times personal Defects, says he, are mis-

“ represented for Humour. I mean, some-
 “ times Characters are barbarously exposed
 “ upon the Stage, ridiculing natural De-
 “ formities, casual Defects in the Senses,
 “ and Infirmities of Age. Sure the Poet
 “ must both be very ill-natured himself, and
 “ think his Audience so, when he proposes
 “ by shewing a Man deformed, or deaf,
 “ or blind, to give them an agreeable En-
 “ tertainment, and hopes to raise their
 “ Mirth by what is truly an Object of Com-
 “ passion”. Thus in Conversation, to aim
 at the Repute of Wit and Pleasantry by ri-
 diculing such things, is a great Mistake.

CLEAND. It is not only a Mistake in
 point of Wit, and moreover inhuman, but
 also imprudent. Jests of that Kind strike
 deep, and sooner or later will be severely
 repay'd. For, as my Lord *Bacon* observes,
 (q) “ Deformed Persons are extremely
 “ bold. First, as in their own Defence, as
 “ being exposed to Scorn, but in Process of
 “ Time, by Habit. Also it stirs to Indus-
 “ try, and especially in this Kind, to watch
 “ and observe the Weakness of others, that
 “ they may have somewhat to repay”.

EUDOX. His Lordship says elsewhere (I
 forgot the particular Place) *That a Man who*

(q) Essay of Deformity.

makes others afraid of his Wit, may well be afraid of their Memory. This is particularly true in the Case we are upon. Such Banterers are seldom forgotten. And consequently in Prudence (to say nothing of Charity) ought to be very carefully avoided. Even repeating only some proverbial kind of Reflections upon Deformity, without aiming them at any particular Person, proves very offensive. Thus I knew one very unfortunately drawn into a Quarrel, by mentioning a Reflection of the *Spanish Critick* (r) That *deformed Persons are generally no less so in Mind, than in Body; as if they were resolved to be revenged of Nature, for making them remarkable.* In mixt Company there will often be some not quite free from some sort of Deformity, who will be apt to think themselves pointed at, where no such thing was intended.

CLEAND. But a direct Reproach of Deformity seldom fails to be highly resented; especially by Women. And still more, by such as have in other respects a great Opinion of their Beauty, and are industrious to conceal some particular Defect in their Persons. Hence I believe, most People will join in what Sir H. Wotton says of the Earl of

(r) Gracian.

Essex in these Words. (s) “ If ever that
 “ uncouth Speech fell from him to the
 “ Queen, which is delivered to us by one,
 “ who was much conversant then in the Se-
 “ crets of the Court, that she was as crooked
 “ in her Disposition, as in her Carcase (when
 “ haply there was a little Unevenness in her
 “ Shoulders) all my Wonder at his De-
 “ struction is taken from me”.

CRITOM. No one indeed can wonder at his Ruin, if ever he spoke so to such a Queen. She was so fond of being admired for her Beauty, that she is thought to have gone so strange lengths against Queen *Mary Stuart*, more as a Rival of her Beauty, than of her Crown. She even could not refrain from breaking into a violent Fit of Tears, upon being told, that the Queen of *Scots* danced with the finest Grace of any Lady in *Europe*. Into what Passions then may one think she broke, at hearing a direct and most reproachful Slur upon her Person, and by one whom she had chosen for such a Favourite ?

CLEAND. How deeply she repented the least Reflection upon any of her real or her imagined Graces, appears from her never pardoning Monsr. *Buzanval* ; and refusing him for Ambassador, because he had once

(s) In the Discourse he calls *the Parallel*.

mi.

mimicked her pronouncing some *French* Words with a wrong Tone. (t) Probably that Gentleman thought a passing Jest upon so small a Matter as her Accent, or Tone in some Words of a foreign Language, would only raise a little Mirth in Company, without any farther Consequence to his Fortune.

EUDOX. But he might well reflect, that it could not be prudent in a Man of that so publick Character, to banter the Queen he was sent to; and such a Queen, in any Company, tho' upon never so small a Matter.

CRITOM. And the rather, because he could not, or ought not to have been ignorant of her Temper in such things; and that it could not be said of her, as *Macrobius* says (u) of *Augustus*, that *He was more to be admired for the Jests he bore, than for those he made.* *Macrobius* adds the Reason: *because Patience deserves a greater Praise than Wit.* Tho' few Men ever had a more nice and ingenious Turn at a Banter, than *Augustus*.

EUDOX. We may farther add upon Occasion of what was said of M. *Buzanval*,

(t) See the *Memoirs* of *Du Meurier*.

(u) *Lib. 2. cap. 14.* Soleo in *Augusto* magis mirari quos pertulit, quàm quos protulit jocos. Quia major est patientiæ quàm facundiæ laus.

that as *mimicking* is what we find some weak People have a kind of Talent in, so to use it is generally a Weakness. *Aristotle* indeed says : That Imitation is more observable in Man than in other Creatures, as flowing from Reason, and from a great Discernment of Similitudes, which is often an Instance of Wit. But he is far from saying : That mimicking the Imperfections of others is any Instance of a Man's Prudence. The Faculty of Laughter is the Property of Man ; yet none laugh more than Fools, and nothing betrays a Fool more than his Laugh.

CRITOM. And speaking in general of all kinds of Mimicking, Bantering, and Jesting with any Mixture of the Satyrical, it is a great Mistake to think they will make a Man prove an agreeable Companion. Such things may surprize the Company into a Laughter, and cause in it a sudden sort of Pleasure : But such Men should remember what Sir *William Temple* says of burlesque Poetry ; That as Men have no Disposition to laugh at things they are most pleased with, so they are very little pleased with many things they laugh at.

EUDOX. It is certain at least, that in many Cases, however pleased Men may be with the things that are said, they are very little

little pleased with the Persons who say them. *Bartoli* (w) advises such Men to remember, that as *Satyrs* were Half-Gods, Half-Beasts; but more deformed by the brutish, than beautiful by the God-like Part: so these Men in their satyrical and bantering Turns, become more hateful by their Malice, than agreeable by their pretended, or even real Wit. If their biting Jest is repeated, it will be more to confirm the Hatred of them as malicious, than an Opinion of them as ingenious. To which purpose may be applied what *Bartoli* there quotes from *Pliny*, of the artful but cruel Invention of *Perillus*: That *his Works are preserved, not to admire his Art, but to detest his Malice.* (x)

CLEAND. How reasonably soever Men might be deterred by such Reflections from those bantering Humours, yet they are very apt to grow upon them, and even upon those who, both by Prudence and other Dispositions, might seem secure from the Danger. Even *Cicero*, tho' so friendly, so wise, and (as many think) so timorous a Man by Nature, found the bantering Humour grow so strong upon him, that it often conquered his friendly and humane Disposition, and

(w) In his *Huomo di Lettere*. § *Maldicenza*.

(x) Una de causâ servantur opera ejus, ut quisquis illa viderit, oderit manus. *Plin. lib. 14. cap. 8.*

both

both his Wisdom and his Fear. And how many do we see, who to make a Jest, will venture the making of an Enemy; or will rather hazard the Loss of a Friend, than of a Conceit?

CRITOM. It is farther observable, that altho' such Turns in Conversation may, for a while, give one something of the Colour of a Man of Wit, yet it will prove a very fading, not a lasting Colour. We had a noted Gentleman (y) in our Nation, who made his Lady feed much upon Chickens fed with the Flesh of Vipers, to preserve her Beauty. . Perhaps this Method might at first add to her Bloom: But it soon ruined her Constitution. Thus such Wit and Conversation as is maintained by Banter and Satyr, and which I will therefore venture to call *Viper-fed*, may for a while give an agreeable sort of a Look, but will soon prove destructive.

CLEAND. And therefore every wise Man, and whoever has a tolerable Share either of Prudence or Humanity, will be of *Seneca's* Mind, that such Jestings are to be avoided; and that properly, there is no Jest in being malicious, nor any thing truly agreeable in biting Witticisms.

(y) Sir Ken. Digby.

*Quare mitte jocos. Non est jocus esse malignum.
Nunquam sunt grati qui nocuere sales.*

By such Jests, according to an old Saying,
while one Man is injured, many are threaten'd.

Multis minatur qui facit uni injuriam.

And thus, instead of being noted for Wits,
they are marked down for dangerous Men.

EUDOX. If to this Humour be added
what is more properly the Spirit of *Detrac-
tion*, the Case will be still worse. Too true
it is, that many seem to like detracting Dis-
courses. But among those many, are none
of the Generous and Worthy. For such Per-
sons naturally detest that unworthy Spirit.
Malice is commonly the Spring of Detrac-
tion. And what Wonder if Persons of true
Worth have an Aversion to those, who shew
such a perverse Disposition? A Readiness to
observe and remember the Failures of Peo-
ple, to discover their Blemishes and Faults,
to judge and talk disadvantageously of
them, to conjecture the worst, and decide
upon such Conjectures, to give a hard Turn
to slight Appearances, to be watchful upon
all Occasions of disparaging, to be even
guessing at Mens Thoughts, and still gues-
sing on the severest Side, and giving the

L dark-

darkest Colours to all Actions and Words ; what can a Disposition of this Nature incline one to, but to conceive a Detestation of the Men, who shew such Marks of Ill-nature, Perverseness or Malice ?

CLEAND. Hence it cannot be a Wonder, that such Men become displeasing, even to those who are base enough to be pleased with their Discourse. The Detractor scarce ever fails to be detested, even where his Detraction pleases ; as Traitors are abhorred, even where their Treachery is liked.

CRITOM. Such malicious Detractors should always consider, that they frustrate their Malice, by too visible an Inclination to detract. For where there begins to appear a Proneness to raise, or spread any prejudicial Reports, Men of Prudence and Worth stand particularly on their Guard, against crediting such Persons as give so great an Instance of their unworthy Disposition. Neither the Just, nor the Wise will take Mens Characters from such Hands. They know that common Fame is proverbially a Lyar, if one may use that Expression, and not only Poets, but daily Experience give that Character to flying Fame. They know that Ill-nature, peevish Humours, forward Dispositions, Spleen, Vapours, Envy, Malice, and Hatred, are ever construing things

Dialog. III. *of* GENTLEMEN. III

things in the worst Sense. They know that small Matters are often enlarged by mere Mistake or Misapprehension. How much more by Passion? The very manner of relating Truth, strangely alters it at second Hand. How much will it vary at several Rebounds? Especially considering who they are, that generally spread Reports and hand them about. They are perhaps the Malicious who first raise them. Thence the Stories are carried round by idle People, tattling Companions, talkative Gossips, ever increasing from one Company to another. Even Malice, that first set the disparaging Character on foot, is surprized to see how fast it runs, and how it rises at every Step. Upon these and several other Reasons, prudent and worthy Men are very cautious in believing, as well as in speaking ill of others. Can it then be supposed they will be either pleased, or influenced by Men, who in their common Talk are found to do so with the greatest Levity?

EUDOX. If we were speaking here with a farther Regard to the Principles of Christianity, a great deal more would remain to be added. But as we are properly considering it only as it may affect the Character it gives a Man as to Conversation, you have very just reason to wonder that Detraction

should be mistaken for a Method of pleasing in Company, while no worthy Man will ever esteem, nor any prudent Man much heed those, who are either weak enough, or malicious, or base enough to make Detraction their Practice.

CLEAND. Particularly one would wonder that some, who pretend to be good and virtuous, are remarkably addicted to decry others. Zeal is the Pretence ; but Malice, Envy, or Ill-nature are the real Cause. Do they expect this will clear the Process of their Canonization ? Christianity teaches very different Principles of Sanctity, nor is the *Kalendar* a Place for Detractors. On the contrary, those who appear in it, entered there by bearing, not by casting Aspersions ; nor infine, is there any pleasing either God, or Man, by disparaging our Neighbour. But certainly the devout Detractor is of all others the most detestable.

EUDOX. When you find one of this Stamp begin to lift up his Hands and Eyes to Heaven, and cry out, *Lord, what wicked Times !* you may be sure he is going to vent his Spleen, or Envy. Some one has displeased his odd Humour, and immediately his Resentment is cloaked with a pretended Grief that Men should be so wicked. Or perhaps a Neighbour stands in their Light, is of a better

better Family, has a greater Estate, or is more beloved in their Neighbourhood. Where this happens, their holy Envy, their godly Rancour, and sanctified Hatred, can not allow him a good Word. But the Disguise is easily seen through, and they generally give the Company a worse Opinion of themselves, than of the Persons from whom they would detract. They even make these be more esteemed. For it is natural to think there is some particular Merit in them, since otherwise there would be no need of such Industry to persuade us of the contrary. Where there is nothing in an Object to shine, no Pains will be needful to cast Shades around it. So that one may conclude, upon observing one Man decry another, there is generally Malice in that, and Merit in this. Perhaps the Conclusion may sometimes fail; but commonly it will stand. And however Merit may fail on one Side, Malice will seldom be wanting on the other.

CRITOM. Yet I verily believe that oftentimes it is rather a Sourness of Temper, than direct Malice, that makes some be so ready at finding and relating Faults, at considering others on the worst Side, and passing the severest Censure. This pleases their Peevishness. Nor is it easy to imagine how far this Temper will go, when it is indulged.

And from what I have observed in some, I no longer wonder at what is related (2) of a Councillor in a Parliament in *France*. The four Man was noted for always opining to the utmost Rigour. He fell a-sleep while a Cause was depending in the Court. When it came to his Turn to opine, they waked him and asked ; what he judged : *My Opinion*, replied he, *is that the Man should be beheaded*. Being told the Case was of a Field of Grass, *why then*, said he, *let it be mowed down*. Severity lay uppermost, and *cutting down*, one way or other, must be the Word. And so it is with several peevish, fretful, and ill-natured Men, in every thing they say of others.

EUDOX. As detracting, blaming, condemning in any of the ways we have mentioned, is very displeasing, so on the contrary it will ever be found, that scarce any one gains more the Good-will of Company, than a Person who is remarkably free from any thing of that Kind, and is ready either to reprove the Detractor, where Circumstances will allow it, or at least to turn off the Discourse. Every one looks upon such a Person as a Man of Worth, who will thus stand his Friend, if ever he should fall un-

(2) It is some where in *Balzac*.

der the Lash of a Detractor. It is a sort of a Proverb that: *He need not fear the Tongue of others, who has a due Guard upon his own.* And certainly no one will be less censured than he, who is most free from censuring others: Or if he should chance to fall under the Strokes of some, he will hardly fail of others to defend him, by the general Opinion, and friendly Disposition he must have raised in Company, by his own Conduct with regard to others.

CLEAND. Much of the like Benevolence may often be gained, not only in the Case of Detraction, but also of Banter. It is something unaccountable how it happens, but so it happens, that the whole Torrent, as it were, of the Company, often falls upon one Person. Almost every one takes the liberty to try their Wit upon him. He is run down, a general Laughter throws him out of Countenance, and often out of Temper too. If he keeps it in Appearance, yet such a Weight of general Raillery seldom fails to leave a deep Resentment. As he can hardly return it upon all, he will be apt to fix chiefly upon the first Author of it, and sooner or later, make him pay for all. Great Care should therefore be had, not to be the Beginner, or chief Ring-leader in such Occasions.

But

But if, as in Prudence, and Good-nature one ought, you endeavour to turn off the Discourse, it is incredible how kindly a good Office of that nature will be taken. And as such Occasions are pretty frequent, there can hardly be a better means to gain Peoples Affections, and make them desirous of your Company, as of a sure Friend against the like uneasy Circumstances.

CRITOM. It happens, perhaps no less frequently, that two Persons in Company, enter, as it were, into a Duel of Banter. Both soon would be willingly parted, tho' neither cares to yield, or leave off first. In such Cases one may often apply the Saying of a *Turkish* Ambassador, when entertained with Prize-Fighters: upon the King's asking what he thought of it, he answered: *If in Earnest, it is too little; If in Jest, too much.* Thus in Effect one may often say of those who engage in a Conflict of Banter. After the first harmless Flourishes, they generally strike too home at length. They begin to touch upon some Points, which displease the more, the more they have of Truth. *Tacitus*, where he speaks of the Death of *Vestinus*, gives this among other Causes of it: That he had passed some sharp Jests upon *Nero*; and adds: *Jests, when they have too much of Truth, are long*

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long remember'd, and deeply resented. (a) And thus it often happens in such Wounds as are at length given in an Engagement of Banter. They are too great to be made, or to be called a Diversion. Whoever dexterously parts such *Antagonists* before they go too far, will gain the Good-will of both, and indeed of the whole Company.

CLEAND. But, Gentlemen, give me leave to mind you, it is time we should be going to *Clearchus*.

CRITOM. *Eudoxus*, you know we always accompany you thither with particular Pleasure.

(a) *Asperæ facetiæ ubi multum ex vero traxere, acrem sui memoriam relinquunt. Annal. 15.*



THE



THE
CONVERSATION
OF
GENTLEMEN.

DIALOGUE IV.

BETWEEN
CRITOMACHUS, CLEANDER,
and EUDOXUS.

CRITOMACHUS.



T happen'd very unluckily that I was called away, as we were going last *Tuesday* to wait upon *Clearchus*. The singular Humanity, the Easiness and Affability, and that good Sense, which always accompany his Discourse, rather add than receive any

any Lustre from his noble Birth, and are singularly engaging.

CLEAND. And it so happened that what we had been discoursing of, that very Evening, was extremely remarkable in the Conduct of *Clearchus* after Supper. I believe, *Eudoxus*, you scarce ever saw two contending Gentlemen so dextrously parted, as were a Couple of ingenious Antagonists that Night by *Clearchus*. As soon as he perceived them grow something warm, how nicely did he interpose in a Way, which equally obliged the contending Parties, and charmed the whole Company?

EUDOX. As Methods of that Kind are very highly engaging, and contribute extremely to make People easy in ones Company, so a Disposition partly to excuse, partly to give some Allowances, and partly to bear with other Persons Defects, will much help to make ourselves easy in Conversation. When we enter into Company, we should come with a settled Idea of that Mixture, which has ever been in Mankind. Among such imperfect Creatures we must expect to meet with Imperfections and Infirmities. Great will be our Disappointments, where we forget these unavoidable Failures. In numerous Companies very different Tempers will occur. To be tolerably

lerably easy among such Varieties, it is necessary to be prepared with the Thought : That if we raise our Expectations too high, we shall certainly fail in our Hopes.

CLEAND. In Effect, some are naturally uneasy, others are so by accident. Some are apt to be hasty and sudden, and carried away with every rising Fancy, or full of Flirt and Flutter. Others, in a contrary Extreme, are over-flow, or void of Vivacity, and as much too heavy, as others are too light. This Man is too cholerick ; that too phlegmatick. One is too haughty and stiff, and others too meanly and servilely complaisant. This, will contradict without Reason, and yet bear no Contradiction, tho' never so much in the wrong. There are Men of envious, or malicious Dispositions. Several are either fretful, or touchy, or splenetick, or insolent, or insine, tainted with some of the numberless Varieties or Complications of the Passions, which are incident to the Heart of Man. Virtue, Prudence, Good-Breeding, Interest, or the like, will indeed often moderate many of these Defects. But still they are natural, and Nature will often break out. This we must expect will happen. Conversation cannot be long had, without meeting the Effects of some such Tempers. We must therefore be prepared accordingly,

accordingly, and the less unexpected such things prove, the less they will disturb us.

EUDOX. To be surpris'd at them, will be a kind of Folly. What can it be else, not to have been convinced that in Men, nay, in the same Man, there is often a Medley of pleasing, and disagreeable Qualities? If we are for enjoying the Good, we must be prepared to bear the Bad, with Patience at least; and remember, it is not reasonable to expect, that the Men we converse with, will prove such as never were to be found. It is a great Weakness, to be uneasy at what is unavoidable; or to fret at what must happen; or to be out of Temper, because Impossibilities do not fall to our Share. It cannot be our Lot, to find that in Conversation, which is not in Nature. Since then it is not in Nature, that Men should be perfect, why are we disturbed to find they have Failings?

CRITOM. Let us remember too, that we have our Faults, and we shall more easily bear with those of others. *If we expect, we must also allow Excuses, says Horace, who was nice enough in his Company (b).*

*Qui ne tuberibus propriis offendat amicum
Postulat, ignoscat verrucis illius. Æquum est
Peccati veniam poscentem, reddere rursus.*

(b) Sat. Lib. 1. Sat. 3.

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He adds, that we must learn to consider the Humours, the Ways, and the Failings of our Friends on the best Side. Otherwise, *How hard a Law*, says he, *shall we fix against ourselves, since no one is born without Faults.*

*Quàm temerè in nosmet legem sancimus inquam.
Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur.*

Thus Justice, and Interest will teach us to balance Accounts by mutual Allowances.

EUDOX. As we must bear with one another, not only by the Rules of Charity, but even for our own Sakes, so upon duly weighing Matters, we shall often find it is our Weakness, that chiefly makes the Faults of others seem unsupportable. For it is here in our Minds, as it is in our Bodies. A Weight heavy enough to make an infirm Body groan under the Pressure, would be nothing to a Man of Strength. Thus the stronger we are in Mind, the less we shall repine under the Weight of other Mens Humours.

CLEAND. This Point may be farther explained by another Comparison. A nice Palate, that finds no Relish, but in Delicacies, and scarce in them, is a Sign of a bad State of Health. It proceeds either from a natural Infirmary, or is caused by Sickness, or is brought

brought on by Debauchery. And thus, to be over-nice in Company proceeds, either from a natural Weakness of Mind, or from indulging Self-love too much, or from having been too long humoured, and now loathing every thing but such Rarities, as are scarce to be met with. How much happier is he, that can be content with ordinary Food? And how much easier the Person that can bear with Company, such as it may commonly be found? And what will that be, but such as will often disappoint us, unless we are very moderate in our Hopes?

EUDOX. Upon the whole therefore, besides all the troublesome Accidents from Mens various Humours and Passions, we shall find, that between those, who talk of more than they know, and others, who know nothing worth talking of; and others again, who neither know how, nor when to talk of what they know, Conversation will often go on in such a Way, that he is happiest who meets with fewest Reasons to be displeased.

CRITOM. Dissatisfactions will happen, not only after general Preparations against them, but even after the most particular Precautions in the Choice of our Company. Often indeed a great Part of our Company

cannot well be said to be left to our Choice. Several Circumstances of Business, of Civility, of Respect and Decency, will often lead us into such Company, as we should not willingly have chosen. But in other Occasions, especially of more familiar Conversation, it much depends on our Choice, and the Satisfaction of it depends on our chusing well.

EUDOX. We should never forget the Advice of *Cicero* in his fine Discourse on Friendship, That *we often pay severely for our want of due Care, but never more than in the Choice of Friends.* (c) A well chosen Friend is certainly one of the greatest Blessings of Life. When rashly taken, it proves the Cause of the greatest Displeasures. The more freely we converse with him, the more open we lay ourselves to be prejudiced, if he proves either false, or indiscreet. In this regard I would apply the *Italian Proverb.*

Dagli amici mi guarda Iddio:

Che da gl' inimici mi guarderò ben Io.

From Friends let God my Guardian be.

As for my Foes, leave that to me.

(c) Cum multis in rebus negligentia plectimur, tum maxime in amicis deligendis. *Cic. de Amicitia.*

For before a Friend is chosen, no Caution can be too great; after he is chosen, scarce any Confidence can be so. Providence must then be our Security, where our own Diffidence can have so little Room, that the Duke *de la Rochefoucault's* Reflection seems to be an Axiom to every generous Mind, where he says: *It is more shameful to mistrust our Friends, than to be cheated by them.* (d) This, is at most the Effect of a false Judgment; that, seems to be an Argument of a false Heart. For one, who finds himself incapable of deceiving a Friend, is no less incapable of suspecting him. Yet, as no Virtues can be opposite, so this generous Confidence must be understood in such a way, as is consistent with Prudence.

CLEAND. Perhaps then the Saying of *Chilo the Lacedemonian* must be our Rule in this Case: *Measure your Love, as if it may turn to Hatred; and your Hatred, as if hereafter it were to turn to Love.* (e) He was one of the celebrated Number of the wise Men; and this is particularly recommended by *Gellius* as one of his wise Sayings,

(d) *Ref. Moral. Ref. 315.* Il est plus honteux de se défier de ses amis, que d'en être trompé.

(e) *Hâc fini ames, tanquam fortè fortunâ osurus: hac itidem tenus oderis, tanquam fortassè post amaturus. Gell. Noct. Atti. lib. i. cap. 3.*

and as found by Experience to be of excellent Use, by keeping the two fiercest Passions of Love and Hatred within Bounds. Yet with many it has scarce been able to gain the Reputation of an *Axiom*. It is even rejected by several, as inclining to Treachery, or to Weakness. May be, only such violent Natures, as know not what it is to give Reason the command of their Affections and Displeasures, have given it so uncreditable a Turn. For my Lord Bacon recommends it as an admirable Precept, but to be construed, *not to any Point of Perfidiousness* (says he; and I may add, *nor Weakness*) *but only to Caution, and Moderation*. It is true his Lordship offers it there as a Precept of *Policy*: But as well the Construction he gives it, as the other Precepts he delivers, shew he is far from meaning that base Policy, which moves upon no other Motive but Interest, and takes this for the only Rule of all its Actions. And sure when Mr. Dryden said,

That Politicians neither love nor hate (f)

he designed no Commendation.

CRITOM. Nor can I see why that Precept of *Chilo* may not well pass for an

(f) In the Character of *Achitophel*.

Axiom of our Conduct, in moderating both Love, and Hatred by a Prospect of a future Change. Such a Change is not only possible, but common. Why then should we disallow of so proper a Lenitive? There is no Friendship so firm, but it may break by numberless Accidents: No Enmity so strong, but it may be turned by Time, and Reason. Why then should we reject a Principle, which will make them both, not only more moderate, but more Christian too? Were we ruled by this Maxim, we should never do any thing in the Presence of a Friend, which we should be unwilling to have an Enemy Witness of. To act with too great a Security of an inviolable Friendship, is apt to carry one too far. How many wish they had never been so intimate with some, nor so averse to others? It must indeed be owned that *Cbilo's* Principle leads between two dangerous Extremes, either of too much Diffidence with Friends, or too great a Weakness in just Occasions of Resentment. The Difficulty of avoiding either Extreme, makes it a difficult matter to seem inclinable to allow that for a Principle of Conduct, without hazarding the Opinion of a sincere and generous Mind. But as no one perhaps (to judge by the Account of *Gellius*) ever understood the just Ideas of Friendship

Friendship better than *Chilo*, so I flatter myself you both know me so well, that I shall not suffer in yours, by owning I am of *Chilo*'s Opinion.

EUDOX. No, Sir, there is no Danger of our mistaking your Generosity or Friendship in a due Application of that Philosopher's Notions in the Case. But let me add, that since there is something more disingenuous in the Character of a loose Friend, than in that of a weak Enemy, one may wonder it should be more common to find People upon Terms of Suspicion, for fear of a future Variance; than of Moderation in their Enmities, upon the View of a future Reconciliation. Were the Matter to be weighed by Principles of Christianity, the Balance of Moderation in Enmities, would be at least equal. Nor will it be much otherwise, to consider the Matter only according to human Prudence. There is no need to call here upon the Sanctity of our Religion, for want of natural Reason. For what can be more according to Reason, than to keep so violent a Passion within such Bounds; or to regulate our present Proceedings, as we should wish to have done, when upon any Change, we cast an eye upon past Actions? The Decrees of Providence are infinitely wise, because grounded upon a full Knowledge of all
future

future events : And human Actions are more or less prudent, as they are framed upon a more exact Prospect of the future. Whence it follows, that we should in present Enmities act, as if we had foreseen an Agreement. Let present Dislikes be never so strong, how soon may they cease ? How soon may it happen, that you will perceive the Quarrel was only from a Mistake ? That, what now seems outrageous, was in reality a Trifle ? That a Misunderstanding was the only Cause of the Variance ? And how easily may this be cleared ? If the Resentment was upon any real Ground, yet how soon may it cease by due Reparation from the Offender ? or by Mediation ? or wear off by Degrees ? What if Interest should persuade to an Agreement ? How many unexpected Matters may compose it ? But suppose a Reconciliation be never effected : Yet what can be more generous, than to have done nothing to an Enemy, which you would have been sorry to have done, if you had foreseen a future Friendship ?

CLEAND. From what has been said upon *Chilo's* Maxim, I perceive we are in the main of the same Mind in the Matter ; and therefore agree, not only that Caution is very requisite in the Choice of Friends, but also that, when thus chosen, still we ought to converse with them under a proper Reserve. This

is

is to be greater or less, according to the Degrees and Nature of the Friendship. There cannot indeed be properly a familiar Conversation, without some Proportion of Friendship: Yet there is a great Difference between such as may pass for easy and agreeable, and those who are taken moreover for familiar and intimate Companions. There are not many of that Sort to be met with; but of this, very few. Nor by these few do I mean such, as are called Friends in the strict Sense. For it is rarely any one's Lot, to be able to speak of such Friends in the plural Number.

CRITOM'. I remember to this purpose a very proper Saying of a *French* Nobleman, upon his Son's telling him he was engaged to pass the Evening with ten, or a dozen Friends. The Father, who was grown old in the Knowledge of the World, replied: *I am glad to hear you are so very fortunate. Having made the best Search I could for three-score Years, I can hardly say, it has been my Fate to meet one Friend; and you, it seems, find them already by Dozens.*

CLEAND. But let us take the Name of Friend in that Latitude of Meaning, wherein a Plurality may sometimes be found, and as it particularly comprehends those, with whom we may propose to ourselves the Satisfaction of an easy, and familiar, and a fort

sort of a friendly Conversation. Still in the Choice even of these, we are often deceived. An antient Philosopher had reason to say, that some Men are like those Pictures, which must be view'd at a Distance. If you approach too near, you will scarce see any thing of Exactness in Proportion, or Beauty in Colouring: There will appear only a Mixture of seemingly random or confused Strokes. Thus some Persons are agreeable at a sufficient Distance: If you draw them too near by Familiarity or Intimacy, they grow too bold, they take no care to conceal their Faults, and you find nothing of that pleasing Air, which they had in their proper Point of Distance. Or, if you please, they may be compared to Houses finely adorned without, but ill-contrived, and worse furnished within. All pleases in the Front: enter, and you meet with nothing but Disproportions, and Inconveniences.

CRI TOM. Such Disappointments often happen, where we suffer ourselves to be suddenly taken with little Flashes of Wit, or something like it, from beautiful Persons. Beauty has been of old called: *a Letter of Recommendation*. It brings one into Company with a favourable Prevention. But when the inward Accomplishments are found not answerable to the exterior, we are apt to be
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more displeased with such a Person, than with others, in whose outward Appearance we saw nothing remarkable. Fine Shapes, and Airs, and Features raise an Expectation of something extraordinary. Where we find it is not answered, we are concerned for having been so unwise, as to let our Judgment, and Inclination be suddenly gained upon by a meer Outside.

EUDOX. Another *Grecian* Philosopher said, of a bad, and deformed Woman (g) *That he admired the Wisdom of Nature, in not trusting so bad a Soul, with a handsome Body.* When we meet an ill-turned Mind in a graceful Body, we are apt to think of changing the Wonder of the *Grecian*.

CLEAND. Or, if we see People too fondly caught with a graceful Exterior, where other Qualifications are wanting, we may cry out with my Lord Bacon: *That they are generally light, who are endowed with Beauty, or moved with it.* (b)

EUDOX. It certainly must be owned, that a sort of Levity is often remarkable in beautiful Persons. Not from the Nature of Beauty, but from their being careless in acquiring

(g) *Theophrastus Sophista, of Jerpſithea.*

(b) *Similiter leves plerumque sunt quos forma movet, & quos ornat. In Antithetis.*

other Accomplishments, while they find themselves so recommended by natural engaging Qualities. On the other hand it is a Levity, against which few are sufficiently upon their Guard, to be easily gained upon by a fine Exterior. And you must pardon me, *Cleander*, if I mind you, that both of us were too quick in our liking of *Callimorphus*. The Gracefulness of his Person, with that of his Voice and Elocution, had a strange Prevention. He had moreover a considerable Share of Learning. But we soon found he was too conscious both of his Beauty, and his Knowledge. With regard to one, he was almost a *Fop*; by the other, very near a *Pedant*. With a fond Desire of making both appear, he is equally solicitous in adjusting his Ruffles and his Words, his Wig and his Expressions. As regularly as he uses Washes and Perfumes before he goes out, he takes no less Care to provide some studied Particulars, which he thinks may give a lustre to his Discourse, as those to his Skin; and before he enters into Company, he is equally diligent in consulting his Note-book, and his Looking-glass. This gives him a premeditated Stiffness in the Airs of his Person, and Discourse.

CLEAND. Yet, for a while, there was something so amusing in him, so very tak-
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ing, that all those Affectations were overlooked at first. After some Time, the Detestableness of these, made us recover from the Engagements of his superficial Charms, and we happily got rid of our unwary Liking, and his intolerable Company. But in this we followed *Bion's* Advice, That a *Friend* (and it is proportionably the same of a Companion) *is not suddenly to be cast off, lest you seem to have chosen a bad one, or rejected a good one.* Whether by a graceful Exterior, or a superficial Tincture of Learning, or other deceitful Appearances, we are drawn into a liking of some Peoples Company, we ought to withdraw decently, and by degrees. To do it suddenly, must disoblige the Persons we quit, must make every one apprehend us to be humourfome, and governed by sudden Whims.

EUDOX. We had thus gradually quitted *Callimorphus*, before his Affectations had made him every where ridiculous. When Men once begin to overvalue themselves upon their Beauty, they seldom fail to be so. Their Face, if I may use the Expression, gets the better of their Heads, and turns them into Coxcombs. At first they are only laughed at. But after a while, their Weakness is too great to be a Jest, and they are pitied. Such is poor *Callimorphus*: And the rather

to be pitied, because with all his finical Fooleries, he retains a great deal of good Nature, and other good Qualities.

CLEAND. So it is : And one is now too much concerned for him, to laugh even at his phantastical ways of Expression, his quaint Phrases, and both ranging, and pronouncing them with great Formalities of Nicety.

EUDOX. Without speaking any farther of him in particular, for whose Failings we cannot but grieve, let us rather observe in general, that Language in Conversation should proportionably come to the same Standard as in Writing. Phrases in Style, are very flat and childish things. They are still more so in Talking, than in Books. New affected and conceited Expressions, and any thing that looks like what is called *Fustian* or *Bombast*, betray a want of Judgment in an Author, and still more in Discourse. As this requires a greater Ease and Freedom, than any studied Composition, so the least Appearance of industrious ranging of Words and Phrases, is particularly improper in it.

CRITOM. In this kind, you will reckon, I suppose, such as always run into the superlative Degree, under a Notion of speaking very finely. Just before my coming to Town, I met one of these *superlative* Men. Every

Author he liked, had a *most eminently unparalleled Pen*, all his Thoughts were *exceedingly rapturous*, or *most heavenly*, or *infinitely charming Conceptions*. On the contrary, every little Mistake was a *most illustrious Blunder*. It is no less ridiculous to be affecting the use of *Greek*, or other foreign Words. How strangely they mistake if they think this will give them the Air of great Scholars? I shall never forget the Physician, who asked a plain Country Gentleman, to whom he was called, what *Cephalgic Symptoms* he found. Why must he suppose a Man something skilled in *Greek*, before he can tell him, whether he finds any Pain in his Head? Will talking of a Distemper in the Language of *Hypocrates*, be any Help to the Cure? or has he a mind to try whether his Words, or his Pills are hardest to take? But if a Man, who affects some *Astronomical Learning*, has Occasion to speak of any uncommon Steps in Life, or of some odd Proceedings of his Neighbour, what would you think, if he told you, *That his Neighbour's Conduct rolls all in ex-centric Movements*? How ridiculous soever any thing of this kind may be in a Pedant, why shall it be more allowable in a Beau, or a Fop to run into whimsical *Cant-terms*?

CLEAND. No: There can be no Reason why an University-Man in a black Gown
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and a Band, should be laughed at for *Greek* or *Latin* Words, or Terms of Art; and a Man in a red Coat, with red-heeled Shoes, should not be equally ridiculous in affecting *Theatre-expressions*, or *French* Words. Yet how often do our pretty Fellows run into these Affectations, by a strange Mistake of polite Education, and Knowledge of the World, or, as they call it, the *Beau monde*?

EUDOX. We have, not far from hence, a young Heir to a great Estate, who distinguishes himself very strangely in this Kind. His Lady-Mother was possessed with mighty Fears of his contracting the horrid Vice of Pedantry, if ever he entered into a School. Much Reading might draw Defluxions upon his large and beautiful Eyes; and much Writing might give a bent to his Shoulders. But *Latin*, or *Greek* would certainly cut off all Hopes of his ever being a most pretty Gentleman. On the other hand, to have him know nothing but *English*, she thought would not be quite right. She therefore provided a *French Hugonot* for his Master, to whom she gave very strict, but very unnecessary Orders, not to teach her Son any detestable School-learning. These Orders were very sure to be exactly observed by the *Ignoramus* of *Geneva*. Accordingly all the Learning of the young Heir, is a little Tincture of *French*, with an Aversion to Books and *Monarchs*.

But, to say nothing of his *Politicks*, he transfuses his *French* Expressions into *English*, with wonderful Judgment. If occasionally a Word of *Latin* is mentioned in Company, he gives a nice turn upon his Heel, and with an ingenious Sneer, and Shrug of his Shoulders, cries out, *Pauvereté Pedantesque !* His *Hugonot* Tutor gives him a Sign to leave the infected Company, confirms him in a great Contempt of the Schools, and the young Gentleman himself is much satisfied with the great Proof he has given of his Proficiency in polite Education ; and the Mother is charmed to hear how nicely her Son, and how wisely the Tutor behaved in so dangerous an Occasion. Just as she was applauding them both, there came in a favourite Relation of her Ladyship. Upon her acquainting him with what had so lately happen'd to her fine Son, the Gentleman fell into Raptures of *infinite* Admiration, and blessing his Stars, that himself had been also educated with a just Horror of Pedantry : *But Madam* (continued he in the same Breath) *how infinitely this Dress becomes your Ladyship. I vow the Brocade is of exquisite Goût.* What think you *Critomachus* of such Gentlemen as these ?

CRITOM. I think, Sir, we must wonder less at their Mistakes, since Nature, or to speak better, they themselves, either mistake

take, or dislike their Sex. They are in the Number of those, whom *Seneca* the Elder says, They are *unwilling to remain what they are born*; or of whom *Seneca* the Younger says, (i) *They would rather have the Commonwealth disordered, than their Hair*. And as we should express it, had rather see the Church in Danger, than their *Toupeés*.

CLEAND. As some of these pretty Fellows will not bear with any thing in Discourse, that looks like Learning; so there are some of them no less absurd in the rattling Volubility of their Tongue, even upon Subjects of Learning, how little soever they possess of it; and in running from one Subject to another as fast, as unsettled Fancy can hurry them on.

EUDOX. Those perhaps are not less insupportable, who are ever talking of the same things, and making whatever Parts of Learning strike their own Genius, be the constant Matter of their Discourse. Thus some, smitten with Poetry, will be always plagueing the Company with Verses, assuring you that *Homer* and *Virgil* are the best of Poets. But if they get you into *Gildon* and *Dennis*, your Case is desperate. There is little Hopes of get-

(i) Quis est istorum qui non malit rempublicam turbari, quàm comam suam. *De brevit. vite, cap. 12.*
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ting off alive. You are in a manner doomed to be tired to death.

CRITOM. A Mathematician will be as surely fatal to you, by his *Theorems*, and *Problems*: and however little you may know, or care for such things, he will unmercifully lead you into *Conical Sections*, and *Algebra*. If he is an *Astronomical Man*, he will carry you through the *Planets*.

CLEAND. Two of this sort of Creatures we have formerly known. I used to call one of them *Ursa Major*, and the other, *Ursa Minor*. For they are both a sort of Bears in their unpolished Behaviour, and are *Astronomical Bears*; so conceited with their Knowledge of the Stars, that they have no Regard to any body on Earth. Rude and uncivilized as they are, they will complain of a Gentleman's Impoliteness, if he refuses to starve with them in a frosty Night, while they are pointing out the Stars in the open Air.

EUDOX. You cannot have forgot, how rarely these two *Astronomers* were fitted with a Couple of Nephews. One of them had set his Head upon Fortifications. As sure as either of his Uncles had mentioned a Star, he replied with a *Half-moon*; to every *Parallax*, he returned upon him with a kind of Jingle, and would be describing a *Parapet*.
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The other Nephew was as mad of *Architecture*. When his Uncles would be at the Spots of the Sun, he would be finding as many Faults with the *Louvre*, and *Blenheim*. It is strange, cried the Uncles, that one of our Nephews can talk of nothing but *Bastions* and *Counterscarps*, and the other only of the *Doric* and *Ionic* Order, or some such Points. The Nephews wondered as much at their Uncles, and at each other. None of them reflected, that whatever may be a Man's favourite Study, he is not to make it a Plague to all Companies. Yet how often does this happen in all Branches of Sciences and Arts?

CRITOM. Thus I have met a *Chymist*, who was always for inviting, nay forcing one into *Spagyric* and *Pyrotechnic* Wonders. He must teach you to *Amalgame*, and *Fulminate*. You may tell him, you neither fully understand those Terms, nor have any Curiosity that Way. Still he will force you along to his *Terra damnata*, and will not cease, till he has left you nothing but his *Caput mortuum*.

CLEAND. It is still more common to meet a Physician, who will *Pblebotomize*, or *Anatomize* every Company. There are *Cartesians* who are for involving all in their *Vortices*; and the *Peripatetick* is no less trouble-
ble.

blesome about satisfying *the Appetite of his Matter*, which, he bids you remember, is neither any thing, nor nothing. Then he carries you off to a Game at hide and seek, with his *Occult Qualities*; to say nothing of his *Barbara, Celarent*.

EUDOX. There are *Grammarians* too, very frequently forcing *Priscian* and *Vossius* into all Companies. If you are discoursing of the most important Affairs of the Publick, they will turn off the Talk to the *Conjugating* of some irregular Word; or to examine very nicely; whether it can be used *Transitively*. As for an *Etymologist*, nothing can equal his Folly, but a *Pythagorean*, or a *Cabalist* running mad of *Fatidical* Numbers, and Letters. Before you have finished a Sentence, Do you know, says he, the Derivation of that Word? Thereupon he takes you into a long Pedigree of some *Greek*, or *Hebrew* Origin. And this minds me of *Genealogists*. You can never stop them, till they are got to the *Conquest* at least. Then comes the *Herald*, with his *Lions Rampant* and *Couchant*: Or one profoundly read in *Gaffarel*, with a Set of *Talismans*. But infine, however absurd it may be, to run all Discourse into any of these sort of *Topicks*, it is no less so, to be always driving Dogs and Horses into all
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Conversation, with the Country *Esquire*; or for the Town *Beau* to be always talking of *Balls* and *Opera's*, *Dressing* and *Quadrille*.

CRITOM. Will it not seem strange to you, if I should say, that none of these prove more disagreeable, than several whom one might expect should be particularly entertaining Company. I mean several of our Gentlemen Travellers. *Planesius*, I am sure, has more than once tired me with hurrying me round his *Grand Tour* (for so he will be sure to call his Travels) more than ever I was fatigued with riding Post. As to Remarks of his own, you must not expect any. But as he went pretty much the same Ways, so he has many of those impertinent Observations at hand, which stand so thick in *Misson's Travels*. *Planesius's* Method too of fetching his Journeys into Company, is remarkable. If just any Mention is made of Wine, *Oh*, says *Planesius*, *there is nothing like France for Wine. I have travelled it almost quite over.* Then away he carries you to *Paris*, and never lets you rest till he has got to *Lions* or *Marseilles*. His *Italian Ramble* is brought in, just after the same manner. If you only chance to speak of a Song, *Oh*, says he again, *Italy for Musick.* And then he hurries you to *Rome*, *Naples*, and *Venice*. And *Oh!* what fine things he saw
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in the Palaces, of *Pamphilio*, *Borghese*, and *Colonna*!

CLEAND. As *Pseudologus* has travelled more than *Planesius*, and has also a more lively Fancy, so he is not altogether so very tedious in his Narratives. But then he takes most unbounded Lengths in the Proverbial Privilege of Travellers. You may sooner believe old *Mandeville's* Stories, than many of those which *Pseudologus* will swear to from his Travels.

EUDOX. *Aristotle* was once caught by one of those Wonder-mongers. When the Man had run a fair Length of wild Talk, and incredible Accounts, he cried out, *Are not these strange Things?* The Philosopher replied: *Yes, very strange: But it would be much stranger, that any one, who has Legs to go away, should stay to hear you (k).* Very insupportable must that Man's Stories have been, to force such a Reply from a Man so polite as *Aristotle* was in his Time.

CLEAND. As for *Pseudologus*, I have been assured, that even before he went abroad, he shewed a wonderful Inclination to *Romancing*. This is said to run in his Blood, and that his Father and Grandfather were remarkable for it. Nor is it very rare

(k) *Plutarch. De Garrulitate.*

to meet with Men, who have, as it were, a natural, no less than an improved Love, to invent and spread Falsities.

EUDOX. I remember a noble Peer assured me he was at Table, when the strangely memorable *Burnet* gravely observed: That there was in most Men some predominant Inclination; as to Wine, to Women, to Money, or the like: *But as for my Part*, continued the Doctor, *my great Inclination is to tell Lies*. This, no doubt, was a strange Bent. But infine, a vicious Inclination is no Vice, while conquered. How much the Doctor overcame that Disposition, which was indeed a very odd one for a Man, who was to write Histories, is sufficiently apparent from his other historical Accounts, and from those of his own Times. For they are all of a kind, and bear visible Characters of their Parent.

CRITOM. Whatever he, or other Writers may have done in History, it seems plain, that in ordinary Discourse, there are Men, who run wide of Truth, not by Mistake, nor Forgetfulness, nor for Interest, or by way of Banter only; but for a strange sort of Pleasure they take in deceiving, and making Fables pass for Facts. Meer Realities are to them very languishing Entertainments.

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CLEAND. Others alter the Truth, or add to it, not from a deceitful Inclination, but by way of setting off, and beautifying their Discourse with something of their own Invention. When they are found out, they excuse it with a Smile, and tell you, that we often amuse ourselves with airy Projects, and Conceits of what we would do, if in such Circumstances as will never be our Lot, and please ourselves with false Imaginations. What is all this, say they, but telling Lies to ourselves? They add: These Ideas, if they stop within meer Amusement, and are not carried on to Mistakes in Conduct, where is the Harm? Why then may it not be allowable to enlarge inventively in Discourse, where no more is meant, or probably will follow, than a Diversion and Pastime?

EUDOX. That Comparison of our own Imaginations, is neither an exact Truth, nor, if it were, would it be any Argument for Fabling in Company. Our private Imaginations having only Reference to ourselves, are not properly unjust. But in false Words, there is a kind of Injustice, by violating the Right, which others have, that when we use to them such Terms, we should do it in their true Sense; or in such Circumstances, as may sufficiently shew how they are used.

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And then too, as those Imaginations are idle at least, and often lead to more than a meer Insignificancy; so also do, very often, those *Romantick* Discourses. Words, infine, are designed for the Image of Thought, and Truth. Consequently, a wilful Misuse of them, by varying from the Truth, is against Nature. A promiscuous Abuse of this kind would be destructive of human Society. And one would think that such Fblers, or such flourishing Talkers, might be made more cautious by this Consideration at least, that they cannot long fail of being found out, and then will hardly be credited in any thing they relate, even where they speak nothing but Truth.

CLEAND. Yet some there are, who have a sort of a Charm in their *Romancing* way, and know how to time it so well, as not to prejudice the Opinion of their Veracity in other Occasions. *Mythonius* had this Talent in such a degree, that he has often put me in mind of the Epigram, where *Martial* says: *I wonder not at Ulysses leaving the enticing Sirens. I should have wondered, if he could have left Canius, when he was got into his enchanting Fables.*

----- *Illud, Cassiane, mirarer,
Si fabulantem Canium reliquisset (l).*

(l) *Delectu Num. xxxvii. lib. 2.*

CRITOM. One cannot say that *Lalesius* is so charming, as *Canius* is there represented. But he certainly very much out-does his Friend *Spendologus*, in his own way. They were both Companions in a great part of their Travels. But *Lalesius* has a much livelier Fancy, a greater Volubility of Tongue, a fine Tone of Voice, and a very neat turn of Language. Nor is his Discourse confined only to Voyages, and Fictions. He has a considerable Share of Reading, and of Wit; and never wants a great many fine Things to say, almost upon any Subject. In a Word: Few could be more agreeable, if he knew where to stop. But when once his Tongue begins to run, there is no end of the Motion. At first you are pleased with the Delicacy of his Voice, and Expressions. But as he grows warm, the Rapidity of his Tongue increases, and no moderate Attentiveness can follow so swift a Pace, nor any common Patience bear with his engrossing the whole Discourse to himself. Thus, while he forces the Company to be dumb, he makes them almost wish they were deaf.

CLEAND. It is not much better to be, with *Bradylogus*, in the opposite Extreme. He speaks so slow, that Attention can hardly wait for the Sequel of his Words. And yet his Expressions, however long in
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the Delivery, are short in the Number of his Words: For he affects a Sort of *Lacoinism*; and such a Sort, as would often be unintelligible, tho' nothing were lost by the Slowness of his Utterance. His Endeavour to crowd too much Sense into his Expressions, renders it hard to make any thing of what he says. Thus his Meaning is drawn too small, and too close, to be distinguished from Nonsense. At other times, he seems not so much to talk, as to say a Lesson by Heart. The least misplacing of a Word, puts him out, and he must begin his Task again.

CRITOM. His Brother has a good deal of this precise Slowness, but with a Difference. For as the one seems often as if he were saying a Lesson, this rather seems to be giving one. And moreover, by much Reading, and affecting to shew that he has read much, he scarce will make the most common Observation, without quoting an Authority for it. I have heard him cite *Aristotle*, and in *Greek* too, meerly to assure us, that one Swallow does not make a Summer, *according to the Ancients*. He will not say, that a Man comes naked into the World, and is apt to weep in the Cradle, without alledging *Tertullian*, and *Seneca* to prove it. He seems in a manner to have

lost all his own Thoughts, by dwelling perpetually upon what he has read in Books. Long conversing with the Dead, has made him very unfit Company for the Living. And he is, infine, a compleat Instance, that the old Saying may be true: That *the greatest Clerks are not always the wisest Men*, or as it is expressed humourously in barbarous *Latin: magis magnos clericos, non sunt magis magnos sapientes.*

EuDOX. His affecting to appear very Book-learned, is fully equalled by *Mimosphron's* Affectation of Wisdom, and Prudence. The Folly of extravagant Caution has made him strangely ridiculous. He first knits his profound Eye-brows, and gravely strokes his Beard, before he will answer you the most insignificant Question. He will continue this wise Ceremony for some while together, then plucking you by the Sleeve, he will desire leave to whisper something in your Ear; *For indeed,* says he, *one cannot be too cautious in speaking of State-affairs.* Then he casts a careful Look about, to see if there is any Danger of being over-heard. Upon a prudent Judgment that all is safe from that Danger, he goes on: " It is by no means
 " the part of a wise Man, to be forward in
 " talking of *Parliamentary* Affairs. But
 " since

“ since the News-Papers agree, that both
 “ Houses stand prorogued till next Month,
 “ I may venture to ask you, if one may
 “ not partly believe, they will then possibly
 “ enter upon some Business.” You mistake
 if you think he has done. He farther adds :
 “ I am of Opinion, we Lay-men should
 “ leave Church-affairs to the Clergy, and
 “ therefore I never meddle with the *Con-*
 “ *vocation.*”

CLEAND. From such Sketches of his
 Wisdom, it is natural to suppose he is very
 mysterious, and full of Secrets. His ordinary
 Discourse runs much in this Strain. “ A
 “ Person, who must be nameless as yet,
 “ told me at.-----Hold: I think it will
 “ not be proper to name the Place.-----He
 “ told me something-----It is not conve-
 “ nient it should be divulged. However
 “ upon your Word to be close in the Mat-
 “ ter, I will give you a hint, which will
 “ be of great Importance to your Conduct.”
 After these wise Precautions, all he tells
 you, with a sage Whisper, is, that an old
 Courtier told him, he found by long Ex-
 perience, that one ought not in Prudence
 to trust Men too far upon small Acquain-
 tance.

EUDOX. Modesty, Inoffensiveness, and
 Good-nature, make this Gentleman be less
 insupportable,

insupportable, than one would imagine; while *Philotimus*, by the contrary ill Qualities, is intollerable. His Vanity often makes him talk in his own Praise. Upon this Subject, barren as it is, one cannot but wonder to hear how copious he will be. If you offer to give your Opinion upon a Subject, 'till you have heard his, he will think you impertinent. If you contradict him, he will pity your Weakness. He thinks no one has any Wit, but just in Proportion to the Deference paid to his. One good, or at least convenient Quality he has, that he will not easily think a Person in earnest, who seems to say any thing disadvantageous of him. For he is fully persuaded, that his Merit is too conspicuous, to be seriously questioned. Without this Quality, there would be no bearing with him upon any little Appearance of Disesteem.

CLEAND. His Neighbour *Cleon* has full as good an Opinion of himself, and often shews it in Company, with several other Particularities in his ways of Conversation. He speaks faster than he thinks, yet not so fast as he would. His Words hurry out, as if they were jostling for first Place, or would rush out by half-dozens at a time. Besides, he accompanies all he says, with a strange Vehemence of Gesture. All that
Eagerness

Eagerness is common with him upon the most trivial Occasions. This Impetuosity makes his Talk full of abortive Propositions. His Thoughts come, as it were, half-formed, tumbling over one another in a Hurry, all in a Jumble, without Order or Method. This Confusion makes him unintelligible; as Obscurity is the natural Consequence of hasty Talk, huddled Notions, and indigested Ideas.

CRITOM. A little more thinking would save a great many People, above half their Words. A moderate Leisure in reviewing their Thoughts, would render them capable of being understood; and their Meaning might be conceived by others, if first it were so by themselves. In vain they use a Multiplicity of Words or Gestures, to help out their *Embryo's* of a Meaning. All their changing, repeating, and changing again their Expressions, only adds to the Confusion. Tossing their Arms about, stamping on the Ground, and thumping the Table, strikes out nothing intelligible.

CLEAND. How unintelligible soever *Cleon's* Discourse may be, if *Antimachus* is in the Company, he is sure to pretend he understands enough of what he says, to declare he is mistaken. They have long been Antagonists, from School-Boys to this Day.

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An early Emulosity begun between them, still continues. Methinks *Antimachus* would take it ill, that *Cleon* should be spoken of, and he be omitted. *Cleon* affects much to speak from his own Fund, and not from Reading. This was Reason enough for the other, to speak always by Books. In this Spirit of Opposition, whatever *Cleon* says, tho' no one else in the Company can tell what he would be at, *Antimachus* immediately contradicts him. And because one speaks fast, the other draws out his Words slowly, and tells him: *Alas ! Cleon, this is the Fate of posting on too fast, and talking without Book. Reading would have informed you better.* Then he pulls out his Note-book to prove by Chapter and Page, marked out of some noted Author, that *Antimachus* is in the Wrong. The other declares he meant no such thing as his Adversary attributes to him ; and advises him to carry his Notions in his Head, and not in his Pocket ; and that for his part he would not have the old *Leonin* Verse applied to him,

Quod si charta cadit, secum sapientia Vadit.

CRITOM. I will not affirm it is so in *Cleon*, that if he lost his Notes, he would lose all his Learning. But it is the Case of several. Nor are there wanting several again,
to

to whom it is far more secure to carry their Learning in their Note-books, than in their Heads. Their Observations are so very odd, they might cause a strange Bustle and Confusion in their Brains. If *Polyglossus* had kept close to this Method of loading his Papers, instead of his Head, he might have preserved this pretty Sound. Now alas ! it is in a sad Condition. A Multiplicity of Languages has made it a *Babel* of Confusion. While he would pass for a *Linguist*, there is scarce any Language he can be said to speak. What he calls speaking *English*, is a perpetual Jargon of *Latin, Greek, French, Italian, &c.* Some while before he had begun to set up for the Knowledge of other Languages, he had such a senseless Mixture of *Latin* with his *English*, that he often put me in mind of Master *Rombus*, in a Piece of Sir *Philip Sidney's*. (m) There he talks of the Queen's *Formosity*, and of the *Pulchritude of his own Merits*. Then exclaims upon the *turpifying* his Reputation. Yet he will *edoctinate Mens plumbeous Cerebrosties*, and *obtuse Conceptions* ; and *divisionates* the Matter into *Meliority of Function*, and *Superancy of Merits*. Master *Rombus* speaks there too of *brute Nebulons*, meaning rude Rogues ; and I have

(m) At the End of his *Arcazia*, Edit. 6.

heard *Pylogossus* talk very archly of the *Nebulonian* Tricks of his Youth, before he was *cicurated* with Litterature. This sort of *Latin-English*, which is neither one, nor other, was for some Time his common Language. Now he is often running into such a Mixture, that a good Number of Interpreters would be requisite to explain his ordinary Talk.

CLEAND. Not so many I hope, as *Pliny* says the *Romans* were forced to have in one City. That is, if I remember right, a hundred and thirty. (n) But one may wish *Pliny's* Stories did not often want as many Grains of Allowance, as the Number of Interpreters he here speaks of. However, in this Place he cites his Author, *Timosthenes* must answer for the Truth.

EUDOX. One would not easily imagine, how gravely moreover *Polyglossus* will thrust into Company, tho' talking of quite other Matters, some of his whimsical Observations upon the *Greek Dialects*, or *Particles*, or upon the Analogy of modern Languages to *Hebrew*. The less he is understood, the more he thinks you ought to admire him. When he speaks the most like *English*, still

(n) *Lib. vi. cap. 5.* Nostris centum & triginta interpretibus negotia ibi gesta.

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he is strangely formal, even upon Trifles. He will talk of *Robin Hood's* Adventures with as great Gravity, as if he were deducing the *Affyrian* Monarchy, from *Nimrod*, to its Fall : Or will relate some of the most known and trivial Parts of the *Roman* History, or even of our own Times, as if they were no less remarkable and unknown, than the most particular Discoveries of the greatest *Antiquaries*.

CLEAND. But in Formality upon Trifles, he is surpassed by *Phylarius*, who always talks of the most insignificant Matters, not as if he was keeping Company, but as if keeping a School. A Magisterial Tone, and Air, is what never abandons him. From his Mien in a Chair of a Parlour, you see how great an Ornament he thinks he could be to the Chair of an University. In whatever he says, the Solemnity of a *Professor* is visible ; and he uses a great deal of pretended Method in stating, and dividing Matters of no Moment. He commonly begins with telling you : *There are three things to be considered in the Case*. But he seldom gets beyond the first Point : His second comes now and then only ; and the third is generally quite forgot.

EUDOX. He is, moreover, so full of a vain Pretence to vast Learning, that he will hardly
P own

own himself unacquainted with any Author. He is one of those, who, as *Fuller* says in his usual Style, would have you think, their *Omnividence* has looked into all Books, but that of *Life*.

CRITOM. It is pleasant to observe, into how ridiculous Mistakes that Vanity will sometimes lead such People. One was lately mentioning the Observations of *Cujacius*. How it came into *Pantobiblius's* Head, I know not : But he fancied, they were *Astronomical* Observations, and began to commend his great Exactness in observing the last great *Comet*. Another time, hearing one speak of the *Symbola* of *Causin*, he told us : He was not convinced with his Opinion of the Symbol of *S. Athanasius* ; adding with great Solemnity, that, as for himself, he was no *Whistonian*, as to the doctrinal *System*.

CLEAND. These Mistakes put me in mind of one (o) that having heard *Seneca's* Book *de Beneficiis* mentioned in Company, imagined it was of Ecclesiastical Benefices ; and praised it for an excellent Treatise against *Pluralities*, and *Commendams*.

EUDOX. When a neighbouring Gentleman was told, it was *Pblyarius's* Humour, to pretend a Knowledge of all Books, even

(o) In the *Menagiana*.

such

such as never were, he could scarce believe it, till convinced by a particular Instance. *Phlyarius* chanced to pop into the *Coffee-House*, while we were just speaking of this very thing. One in the Room immediately feigned the Name of an Author, and began to commend him for an excellent Poet. Yes, says *Phlyarius*, he is very Good : but I cannot like his *Odes*, so well as his *Elegies*. Then he added, in the true Spirit of a Trifler, that he wondered few Men of Erudition, even among the Poets themselves, knew the right Spelling of the Name of the *Mantuan* Poet ; but that most of them called him *Virgil*, by a most illiterate Blunder, and not *Vergil*, as it should be, according to the best Criticks.

CLEAND. It is natural enough to suppose, that one of such Niceties, is not easily satisfied. Tho' he approved of the feigned Author in great measure ; yet he often finds fault with real ones of the greatest Repute. Even among the Antients, neither *Homer*, nor his *Vergil*, can sometimes escape his Censure ; And for no better Reason than his, of whom it was said :

*To Homer, and Virgil he has a just pique :
For one writ in Latin, the other in Greek.*

But the Truth is, that generally his Remarks on Authors do not so much regard any Part of the main Work, as some insignificant Doubts upon little, and immaterial Incidents ; and especially the disputed Trifles in some Points of *Orthography*. Thus you are sure not to be long in his Company, without hearing him thrust in some Observations, he has drawn from *Manutius's* little Book of *Orthography*. And how often have I heard him declare from thence, that he would rather say *Haruspex*, than *Aruspex* ; and *Lethum*, rather than *Letum* ?

CRITOM. By this Account of *Phlyarius*, it may well be counted a Part of my good Fortune, that I have never been in his Company. For I scarce know a more detestable thing in Conversation, than such a grave Trifler. It was no bad Fancy of the *Grecians*, to make their *Jupiter* sometimes without Ears ; so to represent, that Happiness, and Hearing are often incompatible. I would willingly think, it was from some *Phlyarius*, that the old Painters, or Carvers took the thought of that *Emblematical* Representation.

CLEAND. Or, perhaps, rather from some *Neoleetus* of their Times. The disagreeable Methods of his Conversation are many. To number them all up, *would tire a well-breathed*

breathed Witness of the Plot. He often minds one of the Sayings of *Sir Roger L'Estrange* : That Nature has Writ *Fool* upon the Tip of that Man's Tongue, who will be always telling Stories with an *I did this ; I did that.* Yet such is the common Talk of *Neoleetus*. His Stories too are strangely wild, and full of incredible things, which he protests he did, or saw at least.

CRITOM. During my last Stay in the Country, I was often forced to be with one *Thaumastus*, who would, I believe, at least equal your *Neoleetus* in Wonders. If you seemed to doubt any thing he said, he called on his Man *Titus*, who would immediately depose upon Oath, the Truth of every thing, his Master affirmed. If, still, you seemed not fully convinced, he began to look big, and to stare, and bluster. Then, as his Spirits were raised, he would proceed to stranger Narratives. While he is in these Wonders, he tosses his Head, and Arms about, and flings himself into a great many very exotical Airs ; as if this must needs be a strong Method of Conviction. If any one offers civilly to draw him off from those extravagant Accounts, and Airs, it only makes him raise them higher. The only way to have him cease, is to let him go on without any Re-

ply, or Interruption. Then he will, after a while, begin to abate, and with a Smile upon the Company, concludes with telling them : *You see, Gentlemen, what an Advantage it is, to have been a Traveller.*

EUDOX. As *Neoleetus* has often a great deal of that Heat in his ways of Discourse ; so at other times he affects a supercilious Gravity, as if a formal Countenance would dub him a Philosopher. He puts himself into the mistaken Mien of a very sedate and serious Man. But alas ! the Constraint is too great to last : Soon he returns to his vehement Ways ; and is presently all Heat, and Fancy, without any Moderation, or Judgment.

CLEAND. His Confidence too, becomes him no better, than his Gravity. It is so great, that one may properly call him up, as *Dryden* does *Oates*.

Ereſt thy ſelf, thou Monumental Braſs.

His Face has long been intirely unacquainted with any Symptom of a Blush. A bashful Man seems to him so strange a thing, that he never fails to laugh at a Blush, as he would at an unexpected Jest or Folly. Nor does he think there can be a more ridiculous Sight, than a Man out of Countenance.

EUDOX.

EUDOX. Another of his disagreeable Qualities, and which particularly makes his Company so, is an exceeding Inquisitiveness into the Affairs of others ; even as to their private Family-concerns. He professes, indeed, very highly for his great Secrecy ; but he is a strong Instance, that *Horace* gave a sure Rule, when he advises you, to fly every inquisitive Fellow, because he is always a Tatler too.

Percunctatorem fugito ; nam garrulus idem est.

As there is no End of *Neolectus's* Questions, so there is nothing more certain, than his soon divulging whatever he heard. Sir *Roger L'Estrange* would express it by saying, He has got a *Noverint Universi* upon the Tip of his Tongue ; and that, what you tell him as a Secret, will grow publick sooner than a *Proclamation*.

CLEAND. But what distinguishes him most particularly in all Conversations, is the *Politick* Turn he has taken of late. While you are talking of quite different things, suppose of *Homer*, and *Virgil*, he thrusts in the *Church*, and the *State* : That is in Danger ; and this is ruined : He foresaw, and foretold the Fate of both long ago. Then comes *Liberty* and *Property*, *Constitution* and *Prerogative*

gative, Trade and Commerce, Taxes and Army, and Balance of Europe. With these Words jumbled fast together, he rings a confused sort of Changes. *Magna Charta, Passive Obedience, and Test Oaths* are sometimes added to the Peal: And then you are sure to be stunned.

EUDOX. You know, *Critomachus*, that such a Politician as this, must needs be a *News-monger*. Accordingly, the first thing *Neolettus* says in Company, almost before he has made his Bow, is: *What News Gentlemen, to-day?* If they seem little inclined to that *Topick*, he wonders at them, and declares he is astonished, they do not take the Affairs of *Europe* more to Heart. Thereupon he plucks out of his Pocket a Handful of Papers, partly of the current Prints, partly of Letters from a Correspondent at the *Hague*, whom he has in Fee for Intelligence. These he begins to read with a Voice of Importance, and wise Remarks upon them. The Company drops away. Those, who were not ready at framing a civil Pretence to be gone, are miserably condemned to hear him: He begins with complimenting them upon their good Sense, and just Concern for the Publick. Those who are walked off, he pronounces to be *disaffected*, or senseless Men.

Men. *Had I read*, continues he, *an Advertisement of a new Play, how attentive would they have been? How heedless were they of my News from the Hague? ---- Did you mind that Hint of a certain Potentate's Designs? ----- I know who that Potentate is ----- But it is not proper to name him yet. -----* Thus he goes on till no Patience can stand it out any longer. All abandon him: And away he goes to find some others to tire with his farther Remarks, or rather with a Repetition of the same.

CRITOM. I am apt to think, his News is frequently much of a Strain with that of Captain *Worm*, in Mr. *Cowley's* Play intitl'd the *Cutter*. There the Captain premises, that he saw it under Black and White, from a good Hand beyond Sea, and all in *Cypher*, that the Emperor of *Muscovy* has promised to land ten thousand Bears in *England*, to overrun the Country.

CLEAND. Your Guess is very right. And as *Neolectus* is one, that haunts the *Coffee-houses* hereabouts, the Fear of meeting him, and such others, as often infest those Places, has made me less fond of frequenting them, than I have formerly been.

CRITOM. We are all of us grown much out of Conceit with them. However, since
we

we are under a Promise of being at one this Evening, we must venture. And you see, Gentlemen, by the Clock, it is time we should be going.

EUDOX. The *Coffee-House* we are going to, is less plagued with such *Politick Would-be's*, and indeed, with any other impertinent Resort, especially about this time, than any other, that I know.





THE
CONVERSATION
OF
GENTLEMEN.

DIALOGUE V.

BETWEEN
CLEANDER, CRITOMACHUS,
and *EUDOXUS.*

CLEANDER.



F we were always to meet with
such agreeable Company in *Cof-*
fee-Houses, as we did last Week,
we should easily return again to
our former liking of such Places.

CRITOM. Upon the Satisfaction we
then had, I was induced to go to one on
Sa-

Saturday, when I found as much Reason to fear such Places, as ever. Scarce was I seated, when a gloomy sort of a Man, whom I know not, and hope I never shall, placed himself by me. After one, or two insignificant Remarks upon the News of the Day, he began to declare for the Excellency of our *Constitution*. Then he desired me to observe, that ours is a *limited Monarchy*; and added something of a Distinction between the *Legislative*, and the *Executive Power*. Now, I began to apprehend, I was to have a long formal Lecture of Government. Especially upon his mentioning *Davenant*. But, I soon found all this was only a set Piece of wise Talk, which was to be soon at an End. For as the *Sun*, *Moon*, and *Earth* are introduced in the *Rehearsal*, only to take a Dance; so he did no more with *King*, *Lords*, and *Commons*, than just to make them dance the *Hay* a little, and so march off. Here the Gentleman's *State-wisdom* ended; and away he went, to my great Joy. But alas! the Joy was short. I need only tell you, I was seized immediately after by *Phyfileptus*. He had been reading in the Papers of the Day, of I know not what Curiosity of Nature, brought from *America*; and you easily imagine what followed.

EUDOX.

EUDOX. I often wonder, with Concern, at the great Change in that young Gentleman, who was very rational, and agreeable, till he got acquainted with two or three of the *Royal Society*. Ever since, he has made me afraid of every one, that has the Name of a *Virtuoso*. For, tho' I am very sensible, that many of them are far from being so ridiculously absurd, yet many of them are little better, than this Gentleman, when once they grow fond of that Title. You can now scarce have any thing from him, but *petrified Snails, spontaneous Insects, exotick Plants, magnetical Emanations, hermetical Occlusions*, and the like. Not to say that one would willingly take a Journey to the *septem ostia Nili*, or to those Fallings of the Nile, where it is reported, Men grow deaf with the Noise, (p) that upon my Return, I might defy his *Virtuosity*; yet you may be sure, I am not sorry to understand, his Affairs will soon call him down, and fix him in the Country.

CLEAND. I wish he would take his Cousin *Asthenius* with him, for the Benefit of the Air, as well as for our Ease. He is perpetually making a Catalogue of his Distem-

(p) Obtusis assiduo fragore auribus. *Sen. Nat. Quæst. lib. 4. cap. 2.*

pers, and giving you a Journal of his Diseases. His Conversation generally runs in the Style of the Particulars, he gave us Yesterday in a large Company: That, on the seventh of *April* (it was in the Evening about six a Clock) a Defluxion first took him in his Cheek (it was his left Cheek; for he is very exact) which in two Days time (within an Hour of the time it first seized him) began to affect his right Arm, and whole Side. The Remedies applied cast him into a Fever; which, from the sixteenth, to the three and twentieth, was pretty violent; but from six a Clock that Morning, began to abate, &c. You will not wonder that I remember these Particulars; for you know, he often repeats all such Things in the very same Company. Nor shall I need to tell you, he was exact as to the Times of his Bleeding, and Purg-
ing; and that he produced his Doctor's Prescriptions. One had almost as good run through his Course of Physick, as bear with his impertinent Account of it. It is a wonder, that such *Valetudinarian* Talkers should be so frequent; and that they do not reflect, that such particular Accounts of their Recovery, only makes the Company sick; and that it may be thence suspected, that their Distemper has not yet left their Heads.

EUDOX.

EUDOX. Perhaps *Oneirus* is no less absurd, in frequently plaguing Company with very exact Relations of his Dreams. While his waking Notions are but very indifferent, it would be strange, if his sleeping Fancies should be worth telling. Yet he relates them with great Solemnity, and with that heavy Sort of Seriousness and Gravity, that I have seen half the Company a sleep, before he has got half through the Dreams of the precedent Night. Lately, however, we were not displeased with one of them; seeing it gave an Occasion to an ingenious Gentleman, of relating one of a very surprizing Kind. It was to this Effect. A poor *French* Peasant, in a Dream one Night, heard, as he thought, a very distinct Voice; but in a Language which he did not understand. Yet the Impression was so strong upon him, that he remember'd the Words very perfectly. The next Day he consulted the most Learned of his Neighbourhood. It seems, none of them could explain the Words. He was therefore advised to go to Mr. *Saumaïse* (Father to the *Critick* so well known by his Writings) who was not very far off, and was said, by the Country Folks, to be a *huge Scholar*. When Mr. *Saumaïse* heard the illiterate honest Man repeat the Words spoken to him in the Dream, it was no small Surprize,

to find they were *Greek*, and even elegant *Greek*, to this Sense : *Have you not a Presentiment of your Death?* The Words were so particular, so distinctly spoken by the poor Man ; and he was in so much Repute of Candor, Honesty, and plain good Sense, that Mr. *Saumaïse* concluded, there must be something very particular in the Case. He therefore detained the Man till next Day ; when sending some Persons Home with him, they found his House had fallen to the Ground in the Night, and he must have perished in the Ruins, had he not been forwarn'd by the Dream.

CRITOM. Such particular Dreams as that, or such as those mention'd in Sir *H. Wotton's* Life, may bear relating. But they will not justify the Weakness of either believing, or troubling People with particular Narratives of the idle Fancies of their disturbed Rest. However they interfere with this, they should neither disturb ourselves, nor others, when we awake, by insignificant Accounts of them. They are raised by Fumes ; and must People be plagued with a weak Man's Sleeping, as well as with his other Whimsies ?

CLEAND. Such Persons are particularly apt to enlarge upon their frightful Dreams. And generally too, fall into a farther Weakness, of never being so much bent upon

upon any Discourse, as upon that of Spirits. It is odd, to see them never so well entertained, as when hearing, or relating frightful Stories: Frightful to weak Heads, but generally ridiculously silly to others. Give them but *Dreads*, and *Terrors*, and *Ghosts*, and *Hobgoblins* enow, and you shall be to them a Man of charming Company. *Lord!* (said *Foberius* the other Day, to such a terribly charming Man) *I vow, Sir, I have scarce been able to sleep, ever since you told us that dismal Story! ----- Pray let us bear it again,* says another; *it frightened me sadly.* I once had the Luck to please such a Company very much, with the Story of *Atbenadorus* in *Pliny's* Epistles. But how far soever I am from being very incredulous in such Matters, I am satisfied, it is Weakness to believe them too easily, or to be too easily amused with such Discourses.

EUDOX. Near allied to this Humour of *Apparitions*, is that of being chiefly amused with Tragical Deaths, and Murthers. As to the Weakness of relating Dreams, *Cheironomus* is remarkable in it. But he talks in that, as on all other Subjects, in a way that will secure the Company from sleeping. His Tongue, and his Hands have generally an equal Share in his Discourse. He commonly

monly speaks but one half in Words: Gestures must make out the rest. And truly, these are his best Expressions, as being much clearer than his Words. Even in these he makes a farther Division. One Part is in a low, and whining Tone, scarce to be heard: The other is loud, screaming, and bawling. Particularly when any one seems to applaud him. Upon every Nod you give, he adds a Note to his Voice. It is very ordinary with him, to be in a Sweat, by the Vehemence of his Gestures, and hoarse with bawling, upon a few Nods or Signs of Applause. It is no matter where you nod, or where you smile, so easy the Man is in taking all for an Approbation.

CRITOM. Few indeed are so easily, and so far led away by seeming Applause, as *Gleironomus*. But many are too unguarded in this Point. And yet, when People are found to be ready at casting themselves into Looks, and Postures of Admiration, and give too quick Tokens of Approbation, mixt with an Air of Astonishment, these are far from being good Signs of true Merit, either in the Speaker, or Hearer. It rather is a Proof of Weakness in the Person thus applauded, and that he is got into the Company of weak Friends, base Flatterers, or revengeful Enemies.

Weak

Weak Friends do it, because their Affection is too strong for their Judgment; Flatterers, with some interested Design; and Enemies, to make you a ridiculous Jest to others, and a malicious one to themselves. It were therefore well, to imitate *Phocion*, who, you know, when he saw the People applaud him, asked; *What Mistake have I made?*

EUDOX. Some there are, however, who should not too often ask, what Mistake they have made, nor too easily suspect they have made any. This would make them too shy, and too backward in Company. So it has happened in *Dysarestus*. For fear of a Mistake, he is in a perpetual one. He seems to think, one cannot be grave, without being heavy; nor prudent, without being dull. As if a constant Frown, and a churlish Countenance, were a certain Mark of Wisdom; and a Smile or a pleasant Look, were a Mark of Weakness: Not reflecting that Folly lies in the Extremes on either side; and that it is scarce a greater, to be never serious, than to be always so: Particularly in Conversation, which of its own Nature, is generally ordained, in great measure, for Diversion.

CLEAND. Altho' that mistaken Prudence is one Cause of his morose Silence,
yet

yet he has another very substantial one; which is, that, in Effect, he has little to say. Let him but have a slender Hint, and you shall hear him talk, as long as his Materials will last. For most of his Erudition consists in a few of the peevish Verses of *Juvenal*, and two or three churlish Sayings of *Diogenes*. Such things best suited his Temper, and so fixt deepest in his Memory. As indeed, most Peoples Temper is much more discernable in the Subjects of their Talk, than they are generally aware of themselves. When *Dysarestus* has vented those Marks of his surly Nature and Spleen, he then turns mute again. With a pensive Air, he affects not to hear what you say. His Brow is contracted, to make you think his Thoughts are deep. In fine, he will pass for a Man of important Gravity, and not to be disturbed. As such, let us leave talking of him, as we have often, upon that Account, left him in Company.

EUDOX. But alas! It has often been our Fate, upon leaving him, not to find any better Entertainment with his near Neighbour *Polymythus*. This Gentleman's Company would be agreeable enough, but that he spoils it by over-doing, in the very Way, by which he would please. Observ-
ing

ing that his near Kinsman *Brackmythus* was very taking Company, by the many short Stories he used to relate with great Ease, as with great Brevity, *Polymythus* began to make a Collection of Materials, and set up for a *Story-teller*. But he wanted the right Turn. Not that he wanted Wit, or even Judgment in other things: But the Passion (for it soon grew to a Passion) of telling Stories, overpower'd him. If a Story occurred (and how could it fail in such a Person, who had so much bent his Mind that Way) it was to be thrust in, tho' unseasonably.

CLEAND. Nor does he so much relate Stories, as make them. Whatever he reads, or hears of that kind, he always makes some Additon of his own. And lest he should want due Applause, he is commonly the first, who begins to laugh. Often, indeed, unless he thus shewed where the Jest is to be, one might easily mistake. Accordingly, some of his dependent Admirers often have laughed in the wrong Place. As to laughing somewhere or other, that they know must be done; because he scarce fails to premise, that he is going to tell them a mighty pleasant Passage. Thus with vast Numbers of pleasant things, he has made himself one of the least pleasing Companions

nions in the World. It is strange, that a Man, otherwise not very weak, should either fill his Head, or think to please others, by such Trifles, as are many of his Stories. Even the best of his Stock become tedious, by intermixing his own Inventions, and running them into excessive Lengths.

EUDOX. While he is in these Lengths, it is sometimes diverting enough, to see *Logaster*, who is emulous of him, under a great Strife with his own Eagerness to be talking; and the common Rule of Civility, in not interrupting one, who is speaking. After a while, his Civility yields to his talkative Inclination. But the Company gets little by the Change. For *Logaster* is one, who rather prates, than talks. And tho' he knows a great deal, yet he spoils the Credit of his real Knowledge, by pretending beyond it.

CRITOM. Such Pretenders are so common, that they often make me say, that Silence is certainly one of the most necessary Qualities for Conversation. It may sound like a *Paradox*; but I am sure you will allow it to be true, that to be good Company, one should often say nothing: Not only to give room to others, but not to be running too far one self. Few Men would be fitted better for a fine Companion, than a Gentleman,
with

with whom I was pretty often in the Country, if he could forbear upon Occasions, and be content to speak less of what he knows, and nothing of what is beyond his Knowledge. Whereas now, getting out of his reach, his fine Elocution, and neat Language only make his Ignorance more remarkable ; like an ill-favoured Person, in a fine Dress.

CLEAND. It is scarce possible any one can be more remarkable in that kind, than *Scommatius*. Yet I have still more frequently looked upon him, as an Instance of a Truth, which I have been long convinced of ; that it is hard to determine, how far Jestings is allowable in Company. *Junius Bassus* among the *Romans*, a Man of sharp Raillery, was called *White Ass*, *Asinus Albus* ; because, tho' silly enough in the main, yet he was often lucky enough in his Jest.

CRITOM. Whatever Share of Wit Persons may have, yet a great Freedom in that Way, will never entitle them to a better Name, than that which was given to *Bassus*. All biting Reflections, nay even the very hinting at such, how much soever you may pretend to be in Jest, can hardly fail of being offensive. One cannot but wonder at some Peoples Imprudence in this Point. Certainly, to laugh ones self into many Enmities,

mities, under the Notion of being pleasant, is a sort of Madness. It is better to be dull, than to aim at the Reputation of Wit, at the Charge of frequent Quarrels.

E U D O X. Too great a Freedom in that Way, is a much stronger Proof, that a Man wants Judgment ; or abounds in Ill-nature, more than in true Wit. Those who value themselves upon being thus facetious, may despair of being esteemed judicious. If ever their Wit is praised, it will certainly be with the Disparagement of their Prudence. Even their Desire of thus pleasing, is strangely disappointed : For that sort of Pleasantry almost constantly displeases, more than it diverts. It is too contrary to good Nature, and good Sense, to be agreeable. But when those, of whom might be said, what *Dryden* says Nature did to *Shadwell*, (q)

----- *She laid her Hand on his thick Scull,
With this prophetic Blessing : Be thou dull.*

When such Persons, I say, will be straining hard at a Jest or Banter, it must make them partly odious, and in Part contemptibly ridiculous.

CRITOM. Yet, how many such does one meet, of whose Tongues one might say, as *Dryden* does again of *Shadwell's* Pen ?

(q) In his *Mac-Fleckno*.

*With what e'er Spleen he sets himself to write,
His inoffensive Muse can never bite.*

*In his felonious Heart, tho' Venom lies,
It does but touch his Irish Pen, and dies.*

Several of this stupid Kind, have often with them some Dependent or other, on whom they practice their dull Wit. The poor *Parasite* bears all the Lord's Jest, for the sake of his Table; and may be well represented by the Devise in *Boubours*, of an *Ass* among *Thistles*, with this *Motto* under it: *Pungant dum saturant.* (r) But whether his Lordship, or his *Parasite* makes the most ridiculous, and ungenerous Figure, is not easy to determine.

EUDOX. If meer *Buffoons* are less contemptible, than such Jesters, as we have been speaking of, it is when they seem less malicious in their Folly. For my part, I could never think them agreeable in Conversation. Yet some there are, who might almost be thought of the old *Thessalian* Religion which is said to have adored *Buffoonry* for a Goddess. That sort of Foolery is, at least, so much their Practice, that by much Use, they become Fools in Earnest, from being so in Jest. For, what else must they

(r) Entr. 6.

R

b3

be called, who choose rather to pass for pleasant, than judicious ; and will daily play their Reputation of Seriousness and Prudence quite away, to make People smile, and give to Company the Diversion of a Comedy, at the dear Rate of being themselves more ridiculous, than those whom they endeavour to burlesque or imitate. Generally too, they work the Humour quite into their very Nature, and become Laughing-stocks by Necessity ; whereas they were at first so, only by Endeavour. *Gelassius* now repents very heartily of his former Folly in this Kind, and wishes, in vain, he had never pretended so much to that sort of Pleasantry.

CLEAND. Let him now do what he will, the *Buffoon* and *Mimick* sit fast upon him, and force him into the old Way. He unavoidably does, what makes him be laughed at, and seldom more, than when he endeavours to be serious. The Gravity he would sometimes very willingly put on, cannot be made to fit him ; but looks strangely, and makes a very odd Figure, when joined with the Idea, his former Carriage has left in all, who know him. So that now, he is never more ridiculous, than when he would most avoid it.

EUDOX. Upon the whole Matter : When Pleasantry and Freedom of Conversation are commended, neither such buffooning, nor mi-

mimicking, nor jesting, nor such bantering as have been spoken of, are understood. And much less the scandalous Liberty of those, whom a modest Man cannot hear without a Blush, nor a Christian without Horror. No : He is not to be called free, but impudent, who has no more Respect to the Company, nor Regard to Decency, than to speak publickly of such things, as he ought to be ashamed to think of in private. What Opinion can that Man imagine the Company has of him, when he thus shews himself regardless of common Reserve, both in Prudence, and Modesty, which seldom abandons any but profligate Wretches ?

CRITOM. And on the other hand, what Opinion must he have of the Company, if he hopes to please by such Discourse ? He must think their Minds, at least, are strangely debauched. And while such Discourse naturally implies his framing such a Judgment of them, it is strange how he can thus hope to please them, while he thinks so ill of their Virtue. If really he has a good Opinion of them, and thinks them truly moral, and modest, there is no expressing the Nature of his abandoned Folly, and Impudence.

EUDOX. Nor can one sufficiently expose the impious Folly, of thinking to make a witty Figure in Conversation, by prophane

Jeſts upon Religion, or burleſquing the Word of God ; even more boldly, than they would the *Iliads* of *Homer*. Where Religion appears to have ſo little Influence upon ſuch Men, let them, at leaſt be deſired to reflect, how much they miſs of their Aim. They would paſs for Wits by ſuch Methods : But ſuch Talk can only make their Underſtanding be as much queſtioned by the Company, as their Religion. Can any one make a more ſilly Figure in Print, than an *Aſgill* ? And ſhall *Aſgills* in Converſation, be more eſteemed ?

CLEAND. They fancy, indeed, that their Wit is admired, becauſe they ſometimes make the Company laugh. But they ſtrangely miſtake by imagining it is either Wit, that cauſes ſuch a Laughter, or is applauded by it. What moſt inclines People to a ſudden Laughter, is ſome odd Combinations, which were totally unexpected. This it is that makes the graveſt things cauſe a Laughter ; which will ſeldom happen upon Objects really contemptible. Whatever you ſay of ſuch Objects, can hardly furniſh out a Jeſt enough to be ſmiled at ; whereas, the leaſt Appearance of a Jeſt, upon Objects of real Merit, will often raiſe a Laughter, becauſe ſo very unexpected. But when the firſt Surprize is over, we ſee our Weakneſs, we ſee

see that an odd Fancy, and Levity of Imagination has suddenly prevented our Reason, and we begin soon after to wonder at the Imprudence, as well as the Impudence of him, that offered to ridicule things so far above it : Nor do we then wonder a little at our own Weakness, in having seemed to applaud, tho' at unaware, what we condemn, and abhor, upon second Thoughts.

CRITOM. Your Remark is very just. Nor perhaps can there be a truer Reason given, why *Virgil* in *Burlesque* has seemed so diverting, but that the particular Gravity, and Excellency of the Original, makes the Oddness of the *Burlesque* strike the Fancy more, by so unexpected a Turn. Hence holy Things, being more remote of themselves, from Contempt, and calling for singular Respect, it is not so much any Wit, as the Unexpectedness of the thing, that sometimes surprizes us into a Laughter. Our Imagination is struck with the Oddness of the Combination, before we have time to reflect. Immediately upon Reflection, we are displeased with ourselves, and filled with Indignation at those, who take such Liberties. Upon the whole, I have heard it observed, and very justly, that Men, who would pass for Wits by such Methods, have as little of true Wit, as of Religion, and that, *as Ignorance,*

rance, and Vice are necessary Ingredients in the Composition of those, who are generally called Free-thinkers; so they are in Propriety of Speech to be generally called, No thinkers at all.

EUDOX. That Freedom therefore, as I was saying, which is commended in Conversation, as singularly agreeable, must be far from the Indiscretions of Banters, or the Fooleries of mimicking; and much more from Immodesty, or Prophaneness of Talk. But then, it must also be far from a starched, a magisterial, an assuming, and morose Air or way of Discourse; as well as from all Affectation, either in the Matter, or the Expression.

CLEAND. And as upon a Pretence of being free and easy, we ought not to be any thing rude; so we should be equally distant from all such servile Forms of Complaisance, or mean Deference to others, as look like a base flattering Humour, unworthy of a generous Mind. To be perpetually admiring those, you converse with, may perhaps please Men, who are fondly conceited; but will certainly displease Men of sober Sense. Commendations, even where most deserved, must be cautiously managed. Compliments too, and mutual Civilities must be kept within proper Bounds. Otherwise, instead of pleas-
ing

ing, People will be apt to think, you either banter, or imagine they are weak enough to be taken with extravagant, and meer pretended Respect.

CRITOM. It is certainly no small matter, to regulate Civilities, and reciprocal Compliments so exactly, as not to fall sometimes into a sort of Foppery, or a Suspicion of Flattery. Especially in conversing with Persons of a superior Rank. Few things are more difficult, or require a greater Prudence in a generous Mind, than to avoid being thought proud in failing, or servile by exceeding, in the Significations of Respect in such Cases.

CLEAND. Civilities in general, are Significations of Respect, or of Good-will. As they imply a Regard to our Merit, they please our Vanity. As they import an Affection to us, they please our Self-love. Few are free from Vanity: Fewer from Self-love. No wonder therefore, that Civility is so generally engaging. But then again, as Vanity and Self-love are apt to fix our Minds upon ourselves, and diminish our Esteem and Love for others, it frequently happens, that Civilities are feigned Expressions of Good-will and Esteem. Yet even where we are persuaded, or at least suspect they are not very sincere, still they generally please. Partly because they
keep

keep People at a Distance from offensive Rudeness ; and partly because we think, a good Share, at least, of the Respect or Affection implied in Civilities, is too unquestionably our Due, to be totally feigned.

EUDOX. It is reported to have been a Saying of *Sophocles*, that he thought it as bad, to meet a Friend, who would force him to drink, when he was not dry ; as with an Enemy, to hinder him when thirsty. Thus, says *Bartoli* (s) it is equally troublesome, to be overwhelmed with Ceremonies, or plagued with Rudeness. The one he compares to *Heliogabalus's* smothering his Friends with Roses ; the other, as he expresses it, is wanting what may be called *Jus civile*, and is a Breach of every one's common Right, and just Claim. It is a great Mistake, which some are in, of being roughly plain, and even rude, under a Pretence of being sincere ; and are for branding all Compliments, as Lies, and Cheats. *Bartoli* in the same Place, does far more reasonably compare them to the agreeable Deceits of the *Theatre* ; where we are justly pleased to see Kings, and great Men represented, by Persons who are known to be nothing like those, whom they personate. Thus Ceremonies and Compli-

(s) In his *Simboli*. l. ii. n. 11.

ments are an agreeable way of seeming to bear you a true Respect. He adds, that *Gorgias* used to say ingeniously, that altho' *Tragedies* are Deceits ; yet, he is just, who thus imposes ; and he is wise, who is thus deceived.

CLEAND. Yet upon Occasions, I suppose you will allow a Reserve of Caution to be taken from the *Italian Proverb* :

*Chi t'accarezza più, che non suole,
O t'ha ingannato, o ti vuole.*

*They, who with more, than usual Kindness treat
you,
Either have done it, or design to cheat you.*

But withal, I am persuaded, that, whatever room there may sometimes be for this Caution ; yet, as generally it is Men of truest, Worth, and Humanity, who are the most exactly civil ; so it is a Part of Worth, and Humanity to receive Civilities with the least Shiness, and Suspicion of Deceit. Some neither know how to offer, nor how to receive a Civility. But I fear this generally proceeds, not so much from want of Good-breeding, as from want of Good-nature. It is not so much the Effect of Aukwardness from a neglected Education, as a Consciousness of their own Inhumanity, and morose Temper, that makes
them

them look so strangely, when they either aim at a civil Compliment, or when one is made to them. Finding little in themselves of a truly obliging Inclination, they are sensible, that Expressions of that Nature do not become them. Hence they suspect them in others, and run into a blundering Confusion, when they aim at Civilities themselves.

E U D O X. It were to be wished that, not only Humanity, but also true christian Sentiments always animated mutual Civilities. Then they would not be only sincere, but also Acts of true Virtue. For, even where there is no great Merit otherwise; yet, considering Men in *God*, a just Title would be found, and a true Regard would be paid them in that View. However, taking the Matter, as it is in the common Course of the World, Civilities are very fitting in themselves, and necessary to agreeable Conversation. It is an odd Moroseness of Humour, as has been observed, that makes some Gentlemen (unworthy of the Name, on this very Account) be ever apt to give them the contemptuous Name of silly *Punctilios*. This is only to palliate, or to indulge their Ill-breeding, or Ill-nature. Without a due Regard to such Rules, as are commonly established among polite Persons, the World would soon become savage.

CRITOM.

CRITOM. It is even better, to be over-exact in them, than too negligent in observing them. Excess of Ceremony is troublesome; but Rudeness is offensive, and brutish. Polite Behaviour is not only a sign of Good-nature, but also calls for, and naturally gains a Return. The contrary betrays a bad Disposition, and provokes to Ill-will. The one prevents, the other causes Disagreements and Quarrels.

CLEAND. Even *Virtue, and Prudence*, says my Lord Bacon (t) *without the Points of Civility, like foreign Languages, are not commonly understood*. And therefore he adds, that *Civility is a kind of translating Virtue into our Mother's Tongue*. Now, as it would be a Folly, to talk to People in a Language they do not understand; so it is no better in several regards, to pretend to that morose Virtue, which by Neglect of ordinary Civilities, is seldom understood, and therefore apt to discredit Virtue it self.

EUDOX. Of all the Persons, I ever knew, methinks *Eutropius* was the Man, who best understood, and observed with most Accuracy, all the due measures of Civility. He has often put me in mind of a Part of that fine Character, given to *Germanicus* by

(t) In *Antithetis*. Num. 34.

Tacitus. One cannot compare *Eutropius* to *Germanicus*, either as a Prince, or a Soldier. But as to his Behaviour in common Life, we may apply the Words of *Tacitus*, (u) and say : “ He was obliging to Equals, affable
 “ and good to Inferiors ; his very Mien and
 “ Speech gained him Respect, while he
 “ every where maintained the Greatness of
 “ his Blood, and his Fortune, yet equally
 “ avoiding both Arrogance, and Envy ”.

CLEAND. No : Certainly there never was an extraordinary Air of *Grandeur* more inoffensive, and less invidious. Never was Civility more engaging, nor Magnificence more amiable : Never Conversation more easy, nor Easiness more exactly temper’d. His Familiarity never made any forget Respect ; and such was his Awfulness, as never to lay others under any troublesome Restraint, or hinder them from any reasonable Liberty in his Company. As he was a Man of strict Morality, so his Authority was such, that it was very rare to hear any thing prophane, or immoral said in his Presence. When any thing happened, which he could not approve, or thought necessary to be checked, he generally did it rather by Looks, than in Words.

(u) *Annalium*. lib. 2.

CRITOM. Nature in Effect has given our Looks a particular Force of Expression. Consequently the Countenance shares very much in Conversation. Difference of Aspect carries plain Indications, either of Dislike, or Approbation. How often does a casting down the Eyes, and a proper Reserve in the Air of the Face, give a check to immodest, or prophane Talk.

CLEAND. It is generally the best, and often the only Reproof, which the Circumstances will admit. Words would either provoke a Quarrel, or a Defence. This would either prolong the Discourse; rather than shorten it, or break it off: or would cause a Breach of Charity, under the Notion of a charitable Correction. The Change of Looks will often put a stop to the Harm, no less effectually, and more inoffensively. It is only some abandoned Wretches, hardened against all, that can be said, who will pursue such Talk, when they see you have too much Morality to like it, and too much Civility to reprove them openly in Words.

CRITOM. In other Occasions, a Countenance that shews your own Satisfaction with the Company, is highly insinuating, and inclines the Persons to be mutually pleased with you, and themselves. It is an old Saying: *ut ameris, ama*. Love if you would

be beloved. It is no less true to say : If you would please in Company, learn to be pleased in it, and let your Looks shew that you are so.

EUDOX. Nor are satisfied and open Looks only an Invitation to Good-will, and Confidence from the Company ; but often also they are a great Security from Suspicions, and troublesome Inquiries. A close and reserved Countenance often sets People upon suspecting some ill Meaning, or upon examining into Secrets, which they are apt to imagine lie covered under such Clouds. Nor is there a better way to keep a real Secret, than to bear such a Look, as is so far from giving Notice of any thing concealed, that it seems rather to be the Picture of a disclosed Heart.

CLEAND. Yet under such a Look there may, without the Blame of Hypocrisy, be many concealed Thoughts. See here what Sir *Hen. Wotton* says to this Purpose : (w)
 “ *Alberto Scipioni*, in whose House, says
 “ he, I was tabled, an old *Roman* Courtier
 “ in dangerous Times, as Steward to the
 “ Duke *Di Pagliano*, who with all his Fa-
 “ mily were strangled, saving this Man,
 “ who escaped by Foresight of the Tem-

(w) In his Letter to *Milton*.

“ pest ;

“ peft; told me, *Signor Arrigo, i pensieri*
 “ *Stretti, E’ il volto sciolto* (that is, close
 “ Thoughts, and open Looks) will go fafely
 “ over the whole World.” And he adds,
 that he has found this to be a *Delphian*
 Oracle. On the contrary, that myfterious
 Look, which many affect, is nothing lefs
 than a Sign of that Prudence, which they
 would thus be thought to have.

EUDOX. The moft inviolable Keeper of
 a Secret, I ever knew, was *Eutropius*; tho’
 his Goodnefs, and true Prudence made him
 be intrufted with a great many: He was
 fo far from difclofing any, that he feemed
 to have none. Others, not content to give
 out Hints in Words (which is always an
 Indifcretion, and an Incivility too, when
 they prefently add, that they know fome-
 thing particular, but muft not difcover it)
 proceed to difclofe it by their very Looks.

CRITOM. You muft both needs re-
 member, how remarkable *Barius* was in
 that, as in feveral other Kinds. He was
 full, almoft in all Companies, of myfterious
 Looks, and Hints. Nature framed him to
 a double Heavinefs, of Body as well as of
 Mind. Yet neither was much obferved,
 while he was in a low Fortune; becaufe
 they were not accompanied with Affecta-

tion: Since a considerable Estate was left him by a distant Relation, he begins to imagine, he must shew himself by his Behaviour and Parts, to be equal to his Increase of Wealth. Under the double Weight, which Nature laid upon him, he could not set up for a sprightly Man: But he endeavours to make his double Heaviness pass for a sedate Gravity. He condemns every Appearance of Gainess and Vivacity, and calls them Levity. Mirth, and Wit are sure to displease him, because he thinks they are inconsistent with Wisdom; nor does he distinguish a Heaviness of Temper, from a judicious Sedateness in Behaviour and Conversation.

CLEAND. What is still more particular in him in this Regard, is that he contemns Activity of Body, and lively Sports of the Country, because he is unfit for them himself. The Bulk of his Body has made him sedentary, and lazy; as the Heaviness of his Mind has made him dull. Hence he almost hates equally, to hear any one commended for either of the opposite Qualities. But as he finds the Fall of an Estate to him, has made him considerable, he fancies, if I may say it without a Pun, it has also made him considerate. He talked little before,

fore, because he had little to say; and less now, because he imagines he looks judicious by the Reserve.

CRITOM. There is one *Topick* however, which seldom fails to make him talk more than enough. You must certainly have observed, how ready he is to lay hold of any Occasion to say: What a fine thing it is to have a good Estate, and be of an antient Family. How often does he acquaint the Company, that his Family has been rich and considerable, ever since the *Conquest*? After this Vanity has raised his Spirits for a while, he drops again into his heavy Silence, seldom speaking but when the Glass returns, and he is to name the current Health.

EUDOX. That Vanity of deriving his Line from the *Conquest*, is still more ridiculous in his Cousin *Pheidolus*. And yet this Vanity appears less in his Conversation, than his miserable parsimonious Temper. If ever he commends any Man, you presently hear this for the chief Reason, that he is a wary Man, and grows rich. Whatever he blames, is with regard to Expence. Tell him of twenty Indiscretions of a young Gentleman, if in the Number, there is that of having lost but a hundred *Guineas* at Play, this will be the Folly, that chiefly strikes *Pheidolus*. If the Person, who has

lost that Sum, is in other respects a Man of Wit, *Pheidolus* will not fail to cry out : *Yes : Yes : I ever found your Men of Wit are Fools.* After this *Apothegm*, he remains silent for a while ; and when now the Company is perhaps talking of some Debate in *Parliament*, he is musing upon the Loss of a hundred *Guineas*. Then having carefully turned over his Glass, he repeats his wise Exclamation ; that your Men of Wit are Fools. In a Word : It is not in any Immorality, but meerly in Expence, or Loss, that he conceives Folly to consist ; and all his Talk is infine reduced to the Topicks of Saving or Loosing, or of an Estate and of a Family down from the *Conquest*.

CLEAND. My Lord *Rocheſter's* Verses have made it almost a Proverbial Jest, to talk of a Family.

Which with strong Beer, and Beef the Country rules,

And, ever since the Conquest, have been Fools.

One may therefore wonder, to find several so fond of always talking of their Pedigree, and Estate from that Period of Time. And indeed, the Antientness of a Man's Family, seldom fails to be a ridiculous, and fulsome Subject in his own Mouth.

CRITOM.

CRITOM. On the other hand, it generally betrays an Envy and Pride, to be ready at ridiculing, or undervaluing the Advantage of an antient Pedigree. It is a good Observation here in these *moral Essays* (x) that “ Human Contempt of Greatness is
 “ only to be found, for the most Part, in a
 “ certain Generation of Men, who palliate
 “ their Pride with the Name of Philosophy,
 “ and who since they cannot satisfy their
 “ Ambition in becoming great, at least
 “ please and satisfy a malignant Humour
 “ they have, in lessening, and in abasing
 “ those, that are so. *Since we cannot ar-*
 “ *rive at Greatness, let us take Revenge by*
 “ *speaking ill of it,* said Montagne, plea-
 “ santly enough, to express this natural
 “ Sentiment of Pride.” What these Gentlemen thus have expressed of Greatness in general, is often the Case of Men, who undervalue the Honour of descending from a good Family.

CLEAND. The pretended, and proud Contempt of such a Descent, is often observable in Men, who by some tolerable natural Parts, have risen to very easy or rich Circumstances. While no one would have reproached them with the Meanness

(x) Essay of Grandeur. §. 3.

of their Birth, or even thought of it, they often betray it in their Discourse, by undervaluing with equal Envy and Pride, the Advantage of a Family. Upon the whole; a Person well born, if he is also one of good Sense, will scarce ever speak of his Family; and one whom Nature has favoured with right good Sense, tho' not with the Birth of a Gentleman, will as seldom express any Disregard to the Advantage of a better Descent.

EUDOX. Besides all the several ways of Conversation, which we have hitherto spoken of, since we have been pursuing this Subject, there remains several others, in Part very different, and in Part consisting of a Mixture of those, whereof we have been speaking. Thus you will sometimes meet with a sort of Bluntness in Conversations, which, without any Rudeness or Pride, pleases by a peculiar Air of Frankness and Sincerity. *Eleutherius*, for Example, has a natural unpolished Turn, which is no less agreeable, than it is entirely artless; and his Candor atones for his Roughness. Others with a small Share of Wit, are very pleasing by a Singularity of an odd, but inoffensive Humour. Some are even agreeably silly. *Evagrius* was far from being silly, and no less far from being rude. Yet there was a
Roughness

Roughness in his way of conversing, on one hand, and on the other, a considerable Share of Good-nature, which made him very agreeable. Especially he was remarkable for good Sense, while at the same time, he had such a Trick, or such a natural turn of Thought and Expression in Occasions of merry Company, that he often came out with Sayings, which seemed so very near to Non-sense, that you was particularly pleased to see him so narrowly avoid, what appeared so inevitable from what he began to say. The Pleasure in these Occasions, was not unlike that of seeing Rope-dancers in Danger, and yet come off without Harm. In this Case there sometimes happens a fatal Slip. But *Evagrius* never failed to recover, when he seemed to be directly plunging into a Blunder. Thus he pleased extremely, with strange Surprizes.

CLEAND. That Oddness never failed to please in *Evagrius*, because it was grounded upon a Fund of Good-nature, and good Sense. In others there is a sort of Silliness, which makes them diverting for a while, but you are soon weary with their Follies. You remember, *Eudoxus*, we were pretty much diverted at first, with one at the *Coffee-House* over the Way, a little after *Critomachus*

chus went down into the Country : But we were soon tired with him, for he had too much of the weak and silly to please long.

EUDOX. I know not how we can make *Critomachus* apprehend better, what it was, that diverted us at first in that Gentleman's Company, than to tell him, that his Way of talking was very like that, which we had been reading in *Elyot's* Trial. Here is the Place.----- " *Elyot* swore against me at
" *Doctors-Commons*, and truly, my Lord,
" I got *Oates* to swear against him : That
" good Man was loth to appear ; I was
" forced, my Lord, to what-de-callum
" him ----- What do you call it ----- Pish !
" What do ye call it. Pish ! You, you
" know well enough what they call it. (At
" length some called out, *Subpæna*. And
" then the Lord went on) Ay, ay, I was
" forced to *Subpæna* that modest good Man
" to swear the Truth, I'll tell you, my
" Lord, by what good Fortune I met the
" honest Doctor. You know, my Lord,
" there is a Gallery in *Whitehall*. You have
" been there, my Lord, and so have several,
" I believe, in this Company. It was not
" the Stone-gallery : No : No : I know
" that Gallery well enough : That is below
" Stairs : No, No ; it was a Gallery above
" Stairs ;

“ Stairs ; and yet it was not that Gallery
 “ above the Stone-gallery, but another Gal-
 “ lery. And yet now I think on’t, it was
 “ not in the Gallery (for I would not tell a
 “ Lye an give me never so much) it was
 “ in a Chamber at the End of the Gallery.
 “ not such a Chamber, which your Lord-
 “ ship knows very well, but another Cham-
 “ ber ; there it was I met *Oates*. No, I beg
 “ your Pardon, my Lord, (I would not
 “ tell a Lye for the World) I did not meet
 “ the Doctor there ; but I’ll tell you who I
 “ met there, &c. ” ----- And now *Critoma-*
chus, I may presume you will not wonder
 that one, whose Conversation was very much
 in the Strain of this wonderful Orator, should
 seem diverting at first, but soon grow very
 tiresome.

CRITOM. Another Rank of such elo-
 quent Speakers, are the *Plagiary* Imitators
 of Mr. *Bayes*, who steal from him those fine
 Flowers of Speech, *A gad, Sir ; and all*
that : Your Story-tellers who lard their Nar-
 ratives with elegantly interposing, almost
 at every third Word, *and so now, and so*
then : Your Men who often seem to doubt
 of your Capacity or Attention, and cry every
 Moment, *do you see, Sir ; do you mind me,*
Sir ; do you understand me, Sir : Or those
 who make their Discourse hobble on with
 repeating

repeating at every other Word, *said I, and said he.*

EUDOX. To such Speakers I would add those whom I call *Echonians*. That is, such as are a meer *Echo*, and have nothing to say, but by repeating what they heard last. *Bartoli* (y) speaking of such Men, observes that the Saying of the Poet, *nescit vox missa reverti*, is false in natural Philosophy, since an *Echo* returns back the Words ; and that there are many, who very much resemble the *Echo* in this Return of what was just said by others. Scarce have you ended a Story or Reflection, but immediately they repeat it Word for Word.

In fine loquendi

Ingeminat voces, auditaque verba reportat.

Metamor. l. 3.

And as it is observable, that a natural *Echo* is commonly from wild Forests, the hollow Sides of Rocks, or from dismal Grots and Cavities, so the human *Echoes* we speak of, are mostly from uncultivated, wild, and empty Heads. Having nothing of their own, they only repeat the Sound. In both Cases the Sound is cast back by the *Hardness* and *Hollowness* on which it happens to strike.

(y) *Geographia. lib. 1. Echo.*

ubi concava pulsu

Saxa sonant, vocisque offensa resultat imago.

Georg. †

CLEAND. From what you have thus suggested out of *Bartoli*, it would be easy to make the like Application of the Description Mr. *Addison* gives here (z) of an *Echo* he met with in his Travels. “ At two Miles
“ distance from *Milan*, says he, there
“ stands a Building, that would have been
“ a Master-piece in its Kind, had the Architect designed it for an artificial *Echo*.
“ We discharged a Pistol, and had the
“ Sound returned upon us above fifty six
“ times, tho’ the Air was foggy. The first
“ Repetitions follow one another very thick,
“ but are heard more distinctly in Proportion as they decay. There are two parrallel
“ Walls, which beat the Sound back on
“ each other, till the Undulation is quite
“ worn out; like the several Reverberations
“ of the Image from two opposite Looking-glasses”. Thus some repeat fifty times over, what has had the Luck to strike their Fancy : And quick at first ; but soon the Impression decays, and they are silent

(z) Voyage to *Italy*.

till a new Impulse sets them to a new Repetition.

CRITOM. Others are not even so good as your *Echoes* in Company. They stand meer Cyphers in it, neither odd enough to be, at least passively, the Occasions of Mirth, nor sensible enough to add any thing to a reasonable Conversation. They are no more of the Company, than the Chairs on which they are seated ; and should no more be counted, when you are asked what Company you had, than the *Busto's* or Pictures in the Room. Nor do I reckon them among Company, who only help on the Glafs, just naming the Toast ; or who, if you enter into a little reasonable Discourse, and let your Glafs stand a while, will be apt to do, like one I have heard of, who, upon a like Occasion, told a Gentleman : *Come, come, Sir, off with your Glafs ; this Talking spoils Company.* Such Men as these take good Company, for a *synonymous* Term with being drunk, and therefore deserve no farther Notice as conversable Creatures.

CLEAND. Others again, far unlike either to the *Echoes*, or *Cyphers* we have been speaking of, neither want proper Expressions, nor a fluent Tongue, nor a good deal of acute Thought and Reason ; and yet lose
the

the Grace of all this, by not being able to command their interloping Notions. Whatever Idea breaks in upon their Discourse, it runs away with them. They immediately pursue every chance or incident Reflection. At length, after many various Flights or Ramblings, they begin to recollect their Thoughts, to trace their way back, and return to the Point they had left. Sometimes, when even they are sensible of too wide a Ramble, they rove to and fro' a good while, before they can recover the Tract they have lost.

EUDOX. Among such various ways of Conversation, we must not forget those, who are very fine Talkers in *Recitativo*, as methinks they may be called. I mean those, who often relate, what fine things they said in other Companies. In all Disputes that arose at a Distance, they give themselves the Victory. In those which happen before you, they seldom come off with Advantage. They represent themselves as very full of Wit in past Occasions. But one may in the old Proverb, *hic rhodus, hic saltus*, desire they would shew some of it on the spot, that we may believe they shewed a world of it at a Distance.

CLEAND. I have more than once met with such, as you call fine *Recitativo-talkers*,

who assured me they said very good things in other Company, but never let me hear any such from them, where I was present. One of them however, I knew, who was really taking enough in Company. Tho' indeed he gained the Character of being a Man of fine Conversation, as *Cicero* says (a) *Lucius Apuleius Saturninus* gained the Opinion of being very Eloquent, rather by his Looks, his Action, his Air, and his Dress; than by abundance of Discourse, or his slender Capacity. I believe too, you will allow upon Reflection, that I may say of *Euphonius*, what *Cicero* adds there of *Catulus*, that he was indeed far from being unlearned, but yet, that it was the Sweetness of his Voice, and Fineness of his Pronunciation, that gained him the Fame of speaking well.

CRITOM. As it is not long since I was reading that Book of *Cicero*, so if you will please to hand it to me, I will also beg leave to apply, what he says of two Orators, to two of our Acquaintance, with Regard to

(a) In *Bruto*, seu de *claris Oratoribus*. Eloquentissimus visus est; magis specie tamen, & motu, atque ipso amictu capiebat homines, quam aut dicendi copia, aut mediocritate prudentiæ.

Ibid. Erat ille quidem minimè indoctus: Sed tamen suavitas vocis, & lenis appellatio litterarum, benè loquendi famam confecerat.

Conversation. Thus he owns that he differed from the Opinion People had of *Varro*, who, it seems, was not commonly, much liked. He adds, that both the Rapidity and Subtilty of what he said, cast an Obscurity upon his Discourse; but that he could not easily name any one, who expressed himself with greater Propriety of Words, or was more frequently sententious. I believe you will not be displeased to hear *Cicero's* Words: *In quo fateor vulgi iudicium a meo iudicio dissensisse. Nam populo non erat satis vendibilis: præcepta quædam, & cum idcirco obscura, quia peracuta, tum rapida, & celeritate cæcata oratio: Sed neque verbis aptiorem cito alium dixerim, neque sententiis crebriorem.* As *Cicero* adds, that this *Visellius Varro* was compleatly learned, and a great *Civilian*, you will very easily guess, without my naming any one, to whom I would apply the Character. Nor will you less easily imagine, who is the Person, I think may be described, even as to his Conversation, by what is subjoined of *Lucius Torquatus*; that he was a Man of vast and uncommon Knowledge, even in the remotest kinds of Learning, of a divine Memory, and no less eminent in Strength than in Elegancy of Words; all which was adorned by Gravity,

and Integrity of Life. *Erant in eo plurimæ litteræ, nec eæ vulgares, sed interiores quædam & reconditæ, divina memoria, summa verborum & gravitas & elegantia; atque hæc omnia vitæ decorabat gravitas & integritas.* These, Gentlemen, were the Places I meant; nor did I design to add any more such, tho' we had not been, as you see we are now, called away to Supper.



THE



THE
CONVERSATION
OF
GENTLEMEN.

DIALOGUE VI.

BETWEEN
EUDOXUS, CRITOMACHUS,
and *CLEANDER.*

EUDOXUS.



RETURNING Home, not long since, to expect you about our usual time of meeting here, I bought a Parcel of Books by the Way. Among others, these *Essays* of Sir *William Cornwalllys*. I remember, *Critomachus*, you formerly asked me about them.

CRITOM.

CRITOM. An old Uncle of mine used often to talk of them. He had more of the worthy Man, than of the nice Judge in Books. Yet he had given me a sort of Curiosity to know, what those Essays were. But they never yet fell into my Hands.

EUDOX. Nor into mine till this Day. As soon as I came to my *Study*, I opened them, and just fell into the Essay of *Discourse*; and at these very Words, where he complains, *he suffered much by the Talk in a numerous Company: And wished for Fiddlers to confound them; or any other Noise, but theirs.* What follows will give you a Taste of his way of Writing. *In this Time*, says he, *my Eyes wandering to find some handsome Cause of Interruption, meet with a Fellow in Black. Back again they come with Intelligence, and tell me they have found a Scholar. I go to this Vessel, and thirsting after some Liquor, hastily pierce it, when there issueth Medicines, or Law-Terms. Alas! it is either a Surgeon, or Attorney. My Expectation has broken her Neck.*

CLEAND. By that touch of his Style, I know some, who would be highly pleased with it; but I am apt to think none of us will read such a Writer quite through. However, tho' I will not express it by saying, our Expectation has broken our Neck; yet

yet I am sure we were no less disappointed, than Sir *William*, in a grave-looking Gentleman, last *Thursday* Night.

CRITOM. It seems *Timander* could not shake him off, tho' he knew very well, that his Conversation is far from being answerable to the Wisdom of his Looks. Nor indeed will one easily meet with another, who understands so ill the Difference, of what may be passable in a private Conversation, and what ought to be observed in a numerous Company. Especially, where some of the Number are not at all, or but little known.

EUDOX. Where a numerous Company is met, tho' each single Person may neither require, nor deserve a particular Regard; yet a great one may be due to the Number. What one might excuse, or take little notice of, another will, perhaps, interpret very differently.

CLEAND. And where Persons of different Ages, Sexes, Conditions, Humours, and Religions are met, unless great Caution be used, some Offence will hardly be avoided. What you say, tho' true, and reasonable in it self, may perhaps prove shocking to some, by their applying to themselves, what was only said in general.

CRITOM. And then, as for any great Freedom, it is plain it cannot be taken in those

those Occasions, without Danger of offending some, while you would please others. Thus the Compliments you make to the Young, must be carefully managed, not to displease the Old. If you commend the Learned, beware that the Illiterate do not think you affront their Ignorance. In fine, a wrong Word, or one wrongly understood, or either designedly, or casually reported with a particular Tone (and how easily do such things happen in Numbers) what Prejudice may it cause?

EUDOX. As to the Freedom of delivering ones Opinion upon any disputable Matter, it is no less necessary in Conversation, than difficult to manage right, in a mixt and numerous Company. Even where things may seem never so clear, and unquestionable to you, it is odds, that in such a Company, some will be, or pretend to be of a different Opinion. It is often thought to be a Proof of the great Capacity. of human Understanding, that it can find Reasons to maintain almost any Side. But perhaps they are in the Right, who rather think it a Proof of human Weakness, that we can seldom find Reasons so clear, but they may be contradicted with some plausible Colour. Certainly, at least, one should be cautious in such Company, not to advance any thing,
without

without being able to give readily, not only a solid, but also a plausible Reason. Otherwise, if what you say should be questioned (and it frequently will in such Occasions) unless you can give to your Notions a handsome and apparent Turn, it will look almost as ill, as if you had no Reason at all for them, but had taken them up by meer Prejudice and Fancy.

CRITOM. Let your Reasons be never so solid, and plausible at the same time; still it is imprudent to be earnest in maintaining an Assertion, when you find a numerous Company draws another way. In such Cases let your Opinion drop quietly. It will only make one pass for vain, and impertinent to urge it on. Multitude is too strong for Reason; and the greater Number will often pass for the better Argument.

CLEAND. Not Numbers only, but the single Authority of a great Man, that declares for the contrary Side, will generally be enough, to make a prudent Man let the Matter fall, and so wave the unequal Strife. The Philosopher (I think it was *Favorinus*) was much in the right, to drop the Matter of Fact, wherein he had certainly the Truth on his Side; rather than to dispute it out with *Hadrian* the Emperor. And he gave an excellent Reason for it, to those who wonder'd

wonder'd at him: *It is very reasonable*, said he, *to yield to one, who has thirty Legions at his Command.* Others relate that Passage something differently, in this manner. The Dispute was, how many Years *Augustus* reigned. *Hadrian* was positive, but in the wrong; and made the Time too short by at least two Years. When *Favorinus* was asked afterwards; whether it was very philosophically done, to yield up the Truth: *Yes*, said he; *for it would have been very unwise, to displease a living Emperor, for two Years of a dead one.* This Passage is generally used, to signify how dangerous it is to oppose, even the most insignificant Opinions, of such as have great Power at their Command. It may be applied to Men much inferior to Princes, who yet have Numbers on their Side, tho' Truth be against them.

CRITOM. And indeed there are some, who are seldom without a Train of servile Admirers, ready to cry Yea, or No, just as their Leader pleases. In such Occasions, one can scarce in Prudence do otherwise, than yield, at least in Appearance. For how can one expect to gain any thing by Reason, upon Men who have none, or have preengaged it to others?

EUDOX.

EUDOX. It will therefore be requisite in Prudence, to consider, how far any Opinion, or Person in the Company, may be attended with particular Vogue or Favour. Sometimes a certain Run of Opinions prevails; not only such as distinguish *Whig* and *Tory*, but also in other things: And some Persons are so favoured in Company, that they cannot well be opposed, without Offence. In such Cases it must suffice us, not to be misguided ourselves, without endeavouring in vain to turn the Current.

CRITOM. Even in Circumstances which allow of arguing, or speaking with an impartial Freedom, and the Company does not seem to be all retained on one side, still great Caution is to be used in managing the Debate. Besides a proper Modesty, and shewing all due Regard to the Judgment of others, the Arguments themselves are to be carried on with Art. Rushing on directly with them, as if resolved to force a Conviction, seldom persuades, and as seldom fails to displease.

CLEAND. The advancing your Reasons must resemble the Conduct of a prudent General, in leading on his Men to the Attack of an Enemy, by different ways, as Circumstances vary. *Tacitus* (*b*) after he

(*b*) *Annal.* lib. 1. Consultatque ex duobus breve & insolitum sequatur, an impeditius & inusitatum, eoque hostibus incautum. Delectâ longiore viâ, cætera accelerantur.

had finely described the quelling of a Mutiny in the *Roman* Legions at *Vetera*, adds a remarkable piece of Conduct in *Germanicus*. Finding his Men disposed to prove their true Return to their Duty, by going against the Enemy with extraordinary Vigour, he doubted, a while, which way to lead them on. After having weighed the Matter, he resolved to leave the easier and more direct Way, and to take that, which was more difficult and unusual; *and for that very Reason, was less suspected, and less guarded by the Enemy*. Thus instead of going directly against an Adversary in a Dispute, it is often better to take a Compass. He will probably be prepared with something of an Answer to the common and obvious Arguments. Against others, indirect, and less usual, you will likely find him unprovided.

EUPHON. Those, and the like Precautions, are requisite in all Disputes, but most of all in those of Religion. And as matters stand, particularly in *England*, it is often the Subject of Debates in Conversation. This is the natural Consequence of that great Variety of Religions, which is to be found among us. Nor can we wonder so great should be the Variety, while, by too great an Indulgence, every sort of Men are permitted to broach such new Opinions, as tally best with their wild Notions. This must needs open a wide
En-

Entrance into Disputes. How to manage them right in Conversation, is the present Point.

CRITOM. Commonly they are so handled, that one would almost hate to have them brought into Conversation. They are apt to end in Disgusts, if not in Quarrels. All Religions agree to condemn Passion, while few Men defend their religious Notions without it. What they call their Zeal, soon turns to Anger; and where this enters, what Good can be expected?

CLEAND. There is a very instructive Moral in the old Ficton, that *Minerva* the Goddess of Eloquence spoke a Solecism in Anger. And it is sure to make the greatest Solecisms in religious Disputes. These have been so often the Cause of Wars, and they are so like War in the common Management, that Controversy, and *Polemicks* (derived from War in *Greek*) are grown to be synonymous Terms. The more justly that warlike Term has been appropriated to Discourses of religious Differences, from the common Conduct both of Writers and Speakers; the more they ought both to be upon their guard, against so wrong a Method.

EUDOX. Calmness of Reasoning, is a great Advantage in all Occasions of Talk; but never more than in Controversy. It gives

a favourable Opinion of the Speaker, as of one who is not hurried away with Prejudice. It inclines People to hearken with more Regard, where no Passion seems to have any Share in what is advanced. Heat is naturally followed by a Hurry, and the Hurry with Confusion; and in Confusion, not only the Grace, but also the Force of Argument will Suffer. It will not only hinder you from thinking so well, as you otherwise might do, but will make People apt not to think so well, either of you, or of your Arguments, or even of your Religion, as otherwise they would.

CRITOM. And it will be generally observable, that when Men are conscious of Strength, in their Reasons, they are not inclined to urge them with a passionate Heat. Whoever too, lets an Adversary drive him out of Temper, will generally make People think, he loses in point of Argument. For Passion is not apt to enter, till Reason is going off; and most People will conclude, (as *Sidonius Apollinaris* says, that *Theodoric* used to do) that *his Victory was then sufficiently evidenced, when attested by his Adversary's Anger.* (c)

(c) Tunc demum credit sibi cecidisse adversarium, cum fidem victoriae suae fecerit bilis aliena. *Lib. 2. Epist. 2.*

EUDOX.

EUDOX. Not only in Disputes of Religion, but also upon any other Subject, they ought to be dropt as soon, as they begin to grow up to a Passion. The angry Person will not perhaps, of himself, let the Dispute fall. The other may easily do it; and generally with equal Advantage to himself, and to his Cause. In such Occasions, we may apply (as I remember *Bartoli* does) what *Florus* says, that *Fabius* did with *Hannibal*: *He found a new way to Victory, which was to avoid fighting.* (d) Thus with angry Disputants, not to argue, is to conquer.

CLEAND. One will indeed find some very ingenious People, apt to fly into Heat and Passion, when opposed in such Disputes as rise occasionally in Conversation. This may happen in some Persons from the Quickness of their Imagination, and Liveliness of Apprehension. But generally, the warmest Disputants, are not the most acute. The sharpest Wits easily see, in most disputable Cases, that few Reasons deserve so great a Stress. Or if they are persuaded their Reasons are firm, and sufficiently explained, if still the Opponent persists in denying their Force, they will rather wonder, than be angry.

(d) Novam de *Hannibale* victoriam commentus est, non pugnare. *Florus*.

CRITOM. Possibly some of those witty, but cholerick Disputants, may fancy that their Passion is a Sign of their Wit, and may have taken this wrong Notion, from a Remark of some Authors, mentioned by Sir *Hen. Wotton*. After he had spoken of some outward Marks, which may be *Prognosticks* of Wit in Children, he goes on in these Words : (e) “ I now hasten to those more
 “ solid and conclusive Characters, which
 “ are emergent from the Mind, and do often
 “ start out of Children, when themselves least
 “ think of it. For let me tell you, Nature is
 “ *Proditorious*. And first I must begin with
 “ a strange Note, that a Child will have
 “ *tantum ingenii, quantum iræ*, that is, in
 “ my Construction, as much Wit as *Way-*
 “ *wardness*. This Rule we have cited by a
 “ very learned Man (*Capnio*) somewhere
 “ out of *Seneca*, and exemplified by *Ange-*
 “ *lus Politianus*, none of the meanest Cri-
 “ ticks, in *Pietro de Medici*. Writing his
 “ Life, he concludes, that he was likely to
 “ prove a wise Man, because he was a fro-
 “ ward Boy. Truly I have been many
 “ times tempted to wonder, notwithstand-
 “ ing the Value of those Authors, how so
 “ disordinate a Passion, seated in the Heart,

(e) Discourse of Education.

“ and boiling in the Blood, could betoken
 “ a good Constitution of the Brain, which
 “ above any other Part is, or should be the
 “ coldest Part. But because all sudden Mo-
 “ tions must necessarily imply a quick Ap-
 “ prehension of the first stirring Cause, and
 “ that the dullest of other Creatures are the
 “ latest offended, I am content for the pre-
 “ sent to yield it some Credit”. Thus Sir
Henry. But whatever Credit he might allow
 to that Mark of Wit in Children, methinks
 it should have little Credit as to Men. In
 these it will generally be found, that Anger,
 particularly in such Cases as we are speaking
 of, is rather a Sign of Weakness, than of
 Wit. It is accordingly observable, that when
 Age enfeebles the Mind, the old testy Dis-
 putant will be more cholerick than ever.
 And therefore with such Men, all Contest
 should be particularly avoided.

EUDOX. As with those who grow passio-
 nate, no Dispute should be carried on ; so
 none should ever be entered upon, with such
 as are ignorant, stubborn and weak : Three
 Qualities which are often joined. Such im-
 proper Engagements are carefully to be
 avoided. It is very imprudent to enter upon
 so undeserving a Task. Arguing with such
 Persons is seldom concluded without consi-
 derable Disadvantage. You gain no Credit
 by

by confuting them, and you may lose a great deal should they, by some Chance or other, put you to a Stop or Puzzle.

CLEAND. It is much the same, whether you attack them in Earnest, or in Jest. If in Earnest, the Company will not so much mind, how much Reason you speak, as how little Judgment you shew in spending your Reason in vain. If you do it in Jest, it will be thought base, to be jesting upon so mean Subjects. And besides, it is likely the Jest will be too rude, if it is plain; or be lost upon such Persons, if it is witty, and politely distant. But if they should chance to stumble upon any thing, that has the Appearance of Wit (and even the greatest Blunderers may sometimes deviate into such lucky Starts) they will certainly be applauded upon so unexpected a Turn. It can hardly be imagined, into how great Confusion very witty People are sometimes brought, on such Occasions.

EUDOX. When here you mention witty People, I suppose we need not ask who you mean. Several of the Reflections we have mutually made, will secure us from imagining, that such are meant, as often pass for Men of witty Conversation, without deserving it. A few chance Sayings, whatever Appearance they may have of being ingenious, can-

cannot justly intitle them to that Character. Yet some have often put me in mind of what a *Venetian* says of one among those, who had the *Tiara* in their Eye, at an impending *Conclave*. *This Cardinal*, says he, *is one of those, who hope for that Dignity; but I know not upon what Account, unless it is, that having already found he was made a Cardinal without deserving it, he hopes to be made Pope so too.* Thus some Men, because once or twice undeservedly applauded in Company, have ever after thought themselves worthy to be in the Number, if not even at the Top of the Wits.

CRITOM. One easily finds out such Men in Company, not only by their abortive Endeavours at being witty again, but also by their often repeating the smartish sort of a Saying, upon which they chanced to stumble, and which has ever since set them upon blundering Attempts at some farther strokes of Wit. And here it may well be added, that whoever has said any thing, that has met with Applause, should scarce ever repeat it himself any more. It will look fondly, or as if he was surprized, how he chanced to be so witty once upon a time. Upon this Occasion, methinks I may be allowed to own, that I wonder, how Sir *H. Wotton* came to order this Saying of his, to be put upon

upon his Tomb : *The Itch of Dispute, is the Scab of the Church* ; and to have it stand there in these solemn Words : *Hic jacet hujus sententiæ primus autor : Disputandi pruritus, est scabies Ecclesiæ*. In a less ingenious Man, it would look very like a weak Fondness, to have it thus known, that he was the Author of a memorable Saying. And besides, Gentlemen, if you will not think I am become a rank Critick, I will add, that tho' the Terms of that Saying might pass in Discourse, yet they have something too mean for an Inscription. But this I only mention by the Bye.

EUDOX. As to the other Point, methinks Sir Henry would have lost less Credit, if the World had been left ignorant, that he was the first (if after all he was the first) Author of that Saying ; than if he had not let the World know, he was so fond of it. But to proceed : As there are some, who are much too desirous of passing for Wits in Company ; so there are several, who neither have any Pretensions to it themselves, nor can endure any thing of Wit in others. The more ingenious you are, the more surely you displease them. For they hate any thing so unlike to themselves.

CLEAND. The Dislike is commonly reciprocal, by the natural Opposition of Wit,
and

and Folly. Few things carry a stronger Antipathy in Nature. However, it is better to converse with such as want Wit ; than with those, who will needs set up for more than Nature gave them. To affect Wit, will be a farther Proof of the Want, and make the Defect more conspicuous, and more displeasing too ; as a natural Folly is more tolerable, than a studied one.

EUDOX. That Illustration of Folly, as perhaps it may be called, is the common Fate of such, as study Jest in their Chambers, that they may pass for Wits in Company. Sir *Roger L'Estrange* (f) gives a very expressive instance of this Folly in one, who first bought a fine new Book of *Justin* the Historian ; and then made an expensive Entertainment for a good deal of Company upon the *Thames*. Here was a rare Plot for a Witticism. Accordingly, when they were got some way on the River, he let his Book drop, and being asked if it was fallen into the Water ; he answered most wittily, it was *Just--in*. Thus he verified a Saying, which may well pass for a proverbial one : That *a studied Jest is a deliberate Folly*.

CRITOM. Near to this Folly may be placed theirs, who always extol beforehand

(f) In his *Fables*.

the Wit and Pleasantry of what they are going to relate. If what they say, is really so, it needs no commendatory Preface; and the very Prevention abates the Effect: If it is not, it betrays a want of Judgment. And as Mens Tastes are very different, what seems witty to one, may be insipid to others. This perhaps will appear to none more than to those, who have read such Books, as are called Collections of *Witticisms*, *Jests*, &c. As *Cleander* has told me, you were observing, before I came to Town.

EUDOX. *Cambden* foresaw the Consequence of that Variety of Mens Tastes: and in the Preface to his Book of *wise Speeches* or *Apothegms*, he confirms it by a well-known, but very proper Example. *Diana's* Temple was burnt the same Night, that *Alexander* was born. Thereupon it was said, that it was no wonder her Temple was burnt at that Time, because she was absent at so great a Birth. *Tully* commends this as a witty Conceit. *Plutarch* condemns it as a silly Jest. Let others determine which, of two such great Men, was the better Judge in the Case.

CRITOM. I would rather add, that besides the Difference of Tastes in point of Wit, that Method of preliminary Commendations, is very ungrateful upon another Account.

count. For it touches upon that Freedom of Judgment, whereof all are generally very tender. It looks like a Declaration beforehand, that you will look upon those to be dull, who do not think as you do; and are not as much pleased with what you relate, as you pretend to be. Men are as fond of the Freedom of their Opinions, as of that of their Actions; and will resent the seeming Presumption, of setting your Judgment for a Standard of theirs. This will naturally incline them either to dislike, or, at least, to be less pleased with what you say.

CLEAND. Not to insist farther upon this Folly, or upon that of Men, who will needs be witty in spite of Nature and Reason, it may be said, that of all Vanities there is scarce a more silly one, than to set up for a Man of witty Conversation. This Proposition may sound oddly, but will be found exactly true. For the Title of a *Wit*, particularly in this Kind, is mostly given to those, who have little; and by those, who have less; seeing one, who is truly ingenious, will seldom give that Character, and seldom receive it: Because to give it, is seldom free from Flattery; and to seek, or to admit of it, is generally a Weakness.

EUDOX. This at least is certain, that it is much better to have, what may be called

a good Wit; than what commonly goes under the Name of *a pretty Wit*, and is aimed at by such, as we are speaking of. That is always judicious; this is frequently childish; that is moderate and discreet; this runs into Excess, and Levity, and boundless Flights; the one is regular, the other licentious; this may sometimes amuse, that will never displease; and if not always diverting, at least will never be putidly disagreeable by silly Affectations.

CLEAND. Besides the Ways already spoken of, wherein some would set up for Wits, one of the most mistaken Ways, is that of affecting Singularity of Opinions. This is so far from being an Argument of Wit, that it rather betrays a great Weakness. One can hardly think of that silly Humour, without a Contempt of such Pretenders. How can a Man of Sense think himself too wise, to be of the same Mind with all other reasonable Men? How can he imagine, it is more witty to rove in random Novelties, than to follow received Notions? Common Sense is often lost in the Pursuit of extraordinary Reason; and a Singularity of Ideas, is commonly no better, than a Particularity of Folly.

EUDOX. But if the Singularity is in point of the very Principles of Religion, and
in

in pretending to doubt, even of a Deity, the Folly is no less weak, than impious. For what can be a greater Weakness, than to hope to pass for Wits, by pretending to question that, which all the greatest Wits, of all Ages, have held to be an unquestionable Principle? While they talk of all things being the Effect of Chance, what they say of the Production of the Universe, can be applied to nothing so well, as to their own Discourse. For whenever they say any thing like Wit, it is more by a kind of Chance, than by Reason. A sort of Casualty seems to be the Origin of their Thoughts; and if they speak any thing like Sense, it is by Hazard. There is nothing in Nature so like a *Chance-Production*, as their wild Notions. In a word: I know not how a Man can be so weak, as to think he can make himself an agreeable Companion, by affecting to question those Principles, which are the very Grounds, even of Honour, Worth, Probity, and of all sociable Virtues.

CLEAND. As the Itch of appearing witty, misleads several into the disagreeable ways of Conversation, whereof we have been speaking; so the Vanity of passing for great Memories, misguides others. This makes them, in Discourse, descend to a hundred insignificant Particulars, and trifling Circumstances,

cumstances, which only serve to make their Company tedious.

CRITOM. Besides: the Desire of seeming to abound with Matter, makes them run themselves out very soon. They squander their Stock profusely, in their first Appearances in Company, without keeping a Reserve for future Occasions. This renders them unfit for the same Company, after they have been in it but a few times. For when the same Subjects (as they often will) rise again in Discourse, those *Prodigals* must either be silent, or tire the Company with a tedious Repetition of the same things. How much better had it been, to have managed so frugally, as to have a Supply of something, upon Occasions of such Returns. Prodigality, as well in Discourse, as in Money, is followed by Poverty; and then with Contempt: Whereas a moderate Estate well managed, will suffice to maintain both an easy, and a creditable Life; and a little Matter, to furnish out an agreeable Course of Conversation. Others grow despicably indigent, by their Profuseness, at their first Entrances into Company: Like extravagant young Men, who run through their Estates, at their first coming to *London*.

CLEAND. The Parity of those young Men might be carried on farther in that Particular.

Particular. But I shall beg your Leave, Sir, to apply it rather a little differently. As those young Gentlemen, having been only Country-bred, are apt to be awkward in their Mien and Carriage, and out of the *Mode* in their Dress and Air; so it often happens both in the Subjects, and ways of their Discourse. For (to say nothing of their Impoliteness, and other Failures;) tho' it is true there is something, which never fails to please; yet it is equally certain, that the *Modes*, as it were, of Conversation, often change. And unless these be exactly observed, we shall be apt to fall into many Incongruities. For, as we find a Method of Writing and Style, which was formerly much in vogue, would now be very putid and ridiculous; so it is in the ways of Discourse. And as it would not be tolerable now, to write in that long-winded Style, where almost every Period would fill a Page; or in that, where Puns and Clinches stood for Wit and Eloquence; so it would be intolerable to discourse now in the way of those Times. For, infine, there are Fashions in things of this Nature, as in Cloaths.

CRITOM. Thus our Fathers could remember the Time, when every one, who had any Pretensions to Learning, would lard his Discourse with *Greek* and *Latin*, and

confirm every thing with a Quotation. He would not tell you, that Men are mortal, without an Authority from some learned Writer of the *Antients*. To do any thing of this Nature now, is sufficient to make one ridiculous. Some Quotations from great Authors might be a fine Ornament of Discourse, were it not grown out of Fashion in promiscuous Company, and become unallowable by too frequent an Abuse.

EUDOX. It is observed, I remember, by *Rapin*, (g) that in his time, no one durst so much as mention *Epaminondas* in the Pulpit; because for some while before, scarce a Sermon was to be heard, without something of the *Theban* Captain *Epaminondas*. There are perhaps some, who regret their being debarred the Use of so founding a Name. But they must submit to the Loss, or be a Jest for using it now, that the Abuse of it has stamp't it with an inseparable Ridicule. And in Conversation, some may think it hard, that they cannot unload in Company some of the *Greek* and *Latin*, whereof they have a great Store in their Heads. But they must submit to the Mode, which generally forbids it, or be noted for *Pedants*.

(g) *Refl.* upon Eloquence of the *Pulpit*.

CLEAND. Even in private Conversation among two or three, who are Men of *Letters*, tho' some proper Quotations may be very allowable; yet there must be a good deal of Management, to use them agreeably. In particular, it cannot fail to be ridiculous, to be perpetually returning to some one favourite Subject or Author, and drawing all Discourse to those predominant Points of your Learning. Thus I have known an Exotick Scholar, who would be driving, on all Occasions, into *Greek*, and particularly into *Homer*.

CRITOM. Sure his Fondness for *Greek* and *Homer*, did not equal that *Frenchman's*, who is described by *Rossi* (*b*) where he says, That *Claudius Belurgerius* was, from his very Infancy, much addicted to *Greek*; and in the true Spirit of a whimsical Pedant, strangely impolite in his Language, Manners, Dress, and every thing else: That he always had *Homer* with him, even in the Church, where he used him instead of a Prayer-Book: That a Picture of *Thersites*, drawn by his Directions from *Homer*, was looked upon as an admirable Piece. In fine, he carried his Fondness, or his Folly for *Homer* so far, that out of a strong Desire to visit *Troy*, he under-

(*b*) In his *Pinacothecâ*.

took the Journey from *Paris*, and died at *Alexandria*.

CLEAND. It is from the Oddness, or Extravagances of some such Men, that too much of Litterature in Company, is grown very ridiculous. Some perhaps may think, the Difficulty of using such antiquated Methods of Discourse, may be removed by premising an Excuse. But these Men run into another Mistake, and grow so full of Apprehensions, that at length, they will scarce venture at the most ordinary things in common Sense, without first making an Excuse, and very formaly begging Pardon, for having advanced too far into an Appearance of affecting a learned Air. Now this is still worse, than the contrary Extreme. For it is certainly better, to be even an affected *Pedant*, than an affected *Ignoramus*. Something may be learnt from the one, but nothing from the other. It is certain, at least, that such Excuses grow inexcusable themselves, by the same Rule of frequent Abuses.

CRITOM. Upon the whole Matter: Tho' there is certainly an Excess to be avoided in the Use of Erudition, even in private Conversation among learned Men, and much more in promiscuous Company; yet it is surely a wrong and weak thing in learned Men, to let the Ignorant prevail so far,

far, as to make it ridiculous for a Man, to let the Company perceive he is a Scholar. And I verily believe, that those, who are most apt to decry all Shew of Erudition in Company, do it very much, as *Domitian* did with Philosophers. He put *Rusticus Arulinus*, and some other Philosophers to death, and banished the rest. (i) Nor does he appear to have done it upon better Grounds, than upon his Aversion to Learning. Some, like him, tho' their Aversion would not proceed perhaps to Death; yet would, at least, banish all learned Men from Company. Whatever *Domitian* pretended, he did not think Philosophers were generally dangerous Men to his Empire; but he hated them, as so very different from himself. And those who ridicule Men of learned Conversation, ground their Aversion upon the like Antipathy. Under the Pretence of driving out detestable Pedants, they would exclude all, whose Learning might make their Ignorance more visible.

EUDOX. No doubt but that is often the Reason, why many hate, and willingly ridicule Men of learned Conversation. But, even where there is no just Ground to tax them with Pedantry, it were to be wished, that Men of Learning did not make them-

(i) See *Dion. Cassius*.

selves disagreeable, by too great a Desire of appearing with too much Distinction in illiterate Company. And indeed it is most certain in general, that among all the Ways of displeasing in Conversation, none is more sure, than an eager Desire and Aim to outshine others. Pride is every where hated. Walk but in a Garden, where a Flower out-tops the rest, it will probably be the first that is cut down, and soonest dies. I will not say, that this is only an Emblem, that in Society, the safest way to last, and to escape losing all that Gracefulness, by which we might please, is to keep rather undistinguished from others. Few Eyes are strong enough to bear a great Light; and fewer Men will endure one, who would be too conspicuous above others.

CLEAND. Nothing more certain. And consequently, to please much in Company, will never be done by a Man, that would strike Peoples Eyes with a shining Lustre. The most effectual Way to be agreeable, is to give others Opportunities of shewing themselves to Advantage. Make Men pleased with themselves, and you may be sure, they will be pleased with you. Never will your Wit and Learning be thought greater, than by those, to whom you give the fairest Occasions to shew theirs.

CRITOM.

CRITOM. And moreover, nothing will raise a greater Idea of your Abilities, than so to manage your Discourse, as to leave a great deal to People's Imagination. *Osburn* tells you, that he knew a Gentleman, who would never fling the Bar but once, upon coming among those, who were at that Exercise. *Thus, he had not only*, says that Author, *his own Strength, but the Peoples, which lies in Opinion, to advance him.* Much the same will happen in Conversation. One who gives but some short occasional Proofs of his Knowledge, without any visible Endeavour of making his utmost Extent appear, will probably be thought an abler Man, than he really is. And again: Saying much, and pouring out a world of Litterature, looks like Ostentation; while only giving some few and short Hints, has much the Air of a modest Man; and of one, who thus also shews, he thinks the Company so learned and witty, that he judges it superfluous, and unbecoming for him, to enlarge upon the Matter.

EUDOX. Every one must needs be convinced, upon Reflection, that such Methods of Conversation are highly agreeable. But they are no less rare. For how few are they, who can resist the Vanity of making the most shining Figure they can in Company, rather than of giving such Opportunities to
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the Vanity of others? And after all the Remarks, we have been making for several Days upon this whole Subject, we cannot but remain perswaded more than ever, that it is very rare to meet with all the necessary Accomplishments, for perfecting the mutual Conversation of Gentlemen. How few are there, who fail not, either in the Substance, or Manner of their Discourse? Who neither want a Share of Wit, nor affect too much of it? Who are neither unfurnished with Learning, nor misapply what they know? How few, who speak with a proper Regard to all, and hear with Patience and Complaisance? Who have nothing exotick in Voice or Language; nothing extravagant in Look, or Air, or Gesture; far from all Rudeness, Harshness, impolite Behaviour; and ever mindful of all the just Measures of Civility? How few who are equally free from too much Silence, or the contrary Extreme of engrossing the Talk, and not leaving room for others to shew themselves? Who are always far from any unbeseeming Liberties, ambiguous Hints, immoral or prophane Rants, biting Jest, impertinent and silly Buffoonries, affected Mysteries and Secrets? In fine from being ridiculous *Virtuoso's*, tedious Story-tellers, Politick-mongers, Pedants, and the rest?

CRITOM.

Dialog. VI. of GENTLEMEN. 241

CRITOM. As it is rare to meet with such, as are free from all those Defects, it is easy to conclude, how much they are to be pitied, who are often unavoidably forced to be in Company of such, as have scarce any Degree of the good Qualities mentioned, and a strange Mixture of most of the bad. Yet, this is often our Case: Particularly in the Occasions, which frequently we cannot avoid, of being where *Atelestus* often comes, and oftner intrudes. His best Intervals are those of his Silence. But even that has a peculiar Cast of a morose, dissatisfied, and disdainful Air.

CLEAND. After he has indulged that Humour a while, and he begins to talk, his Tongue soon distances his Thoughts; and his Reason comes too late for his Words. If any Question is asked him, he immediately answers, and then thinks why. And, as strange as it may seem, it is very plain, that he often tells what his Opinion is upon the Matter proposed, before he thinks of any Reason on either Side.

CRITOM. By that means, the Chance at least, sometimes casts him on the right Side; whereas, when he speaks with some thing of Fore-thought, this seldom happens. It was said by the famous Dr. *Hoadly* (if I remember right) of the scarce less famous

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Dr.

Dr. Sberlock, That he has not only a *Tendency*, but even a *Gravitation to Inconsistency*. And we may say, there is a sort of Gravitation, which bears down *Atelestus* to the wrong. So that, to be of an opposite Opinion to him, is almost a general Rule to be in the right.

EUDOX. It is also strange to observe, with what an Air of Method he drives into Confusion. He often begins with a sort of Division, and Sub-division of Points; but immediately forgets them all: And the Tumult of his Head is the only plain thing in his Talk. He begins with Fancy, goes on with Whims, and seldom ends but in a Folly. He roves from one imperfect Notion to another, till he tumbles into down right Nonsense. If he did not run on, without any manner of Apprehension, one would compare his Talk to nothing better, than to running blind-fold in the Dark. Such too is his Ignorance, that, instead of nine Years spent at the *University*, one would not think he had been so many Months at any School.

CRITOM. Thus *Ammonius's* Ass went every Day with him to the Philosophical Lectures of *Porphyrius*; and you know it is recorded, how great a Scholar the Animal proved. Yet we have often heard *Atelestus* talk of *Predicables*, and *Categorematical* Terms,

Terms, and *Metaphysical Abstractions*. How much he understands of those, and other Terms of Arts, may be guessed, by what happened not long since. A Gentleman waggishly asked him: Pray you, *Atelestus*, what is a *Climax*? He answered immediately (for he thinks, that to stop at an Answer, is a great Argument of Ignorance) and told him very gravely; it is a particular Sort of Fish, scarce known but in the *Caspian Sea*. For you must know, he deals much in the *Caspian*. There is his general Resort in most Cases of *Geography*, at least. And one might venture a Wager, that, if he were asked about the Situation of *Nankin*, he would place it on the *Caspian Sea*.

CLEAND. In those, and all other Occasions of his Blunders, and Ignorance, his Forehead has a constant Privilege against both Confutation, and Confusion. Yet it is not the Redness of his Face, that secures him from blushing; as *Tacitus* says it was in *Domitian*. (k) But, if *Atelestus* does not, others often blush at his Ignorance, and his Boldness. However, those who know him, let his grossest Mistakes pass, without aiming to set him right. Not only because he

(k) Rubor, quo se contra pudorem munierat. *In vitâ Agricolaë.*

is almost as incapable, as he is unwilling, to be better informed; but also, to avoid the unmannerly, and injurious ways of his Replies in such Occasions.

CRITOM. Yet, he is not less ready to find Fault with others, without any Ground. In Sir Roger L'Estrange's way of Expression, one would say, He pretends to the Privilege of the Animal, which formerly rebuked a Prophet. And frequently too, by a strange Mistake of hoping so to pass for a sharp Wit, he snarles, and bites: Not reflecting, that, as Sir Roger expresses it again, It is hard a Man should pass for Witty, meerly because he is Injurious; *as if Men were to be chosen as Dogs, by the Blackness of their Mouths.*

EUDOX. At other times, he puts me in mind of *Lucius Veratius*, who, as *Gellius* relates (1) was of an odd Humour, which he indulged by walking the Streets of *Rome*, and giving Blows to such as he met; and ordered his Man to follow him with a Bag of Money, to give to every one he struck, a piece of Money, to the value of the *Fine*, established by the Laws of the *twelve Tables*, in such Cases. Thus *Atelestus* will often go from one Company to another, giving some

(1) *Noct. Attic.* l. 20. cap. 1.

injurious

injurious Words or other (which he calls Banter) and then thinks to atone for them, not by Money, but by Excuses. One may suppose some People were more ready to return the Blows of *Veratius*, than to take his Money. And I am sure *Atelestus* often meets with those, who make him a fitter Return, than to accept his awkward Compliments and Excuses.

CLEAND. He is, moreover, most singularly unseasonable, and impertinent in his Talk. Tho' he perceives a Man is in haste, and upon Business, he will stop him, and tell him: *Lord, Sir, how opportunely this happens. I wanted to talk with you.* If you answer him; *Not very opportunely at present; for I am really in haste:* He replies; you cannot be so much in haste, as not to stay to be informed of something very *momentous*: That is one of his favourite Words. Then after a considerable Preface of complimentary Follies, he proceeds to some impertinent Pieces of a Sort of *Apothegms*, which he has got by-heart, and repeats like a Lesson; --- That, Surprise is from Ignorance; Ignorance from want of Information; want of Information from want of Friends; and want of Friends is a great Misfortune, &c. After a long Excursion of this Kind, upon your giving new Signs of your Haste; he

adds: *Believe me, Sir, it is not every Body, that I take such care to inform.* When at length he comes to the Matter, the *momentous Matter*, introduced with all this Wisdom, and Concern for you, it proves to be something of a Squabble in a *Polish Diet*, mentioned in a late *Gazette*. Upon this, you must be gone; civilly, if you can: But you must be gone; otherwise he will have you in for an unmerciful Roll of Politicks.

CRITOM. That has been exactly my Case with him, more than once. Nay, he has met me just as I arrived from a tiresome Journey, and invited me immediately to take a walk with him in the *Park*. I mistake. He never calls it a Walk, but a *Promenade*; to shew his Breeding. When the *Promenade* was waved, he staid with me, at least, till I was more tired with his prating, than I had been with riding. Exactly like the *Impertinent*, described by *Theophrastus*, he gives his Advice, when he hears an Affair is over. If he is informed, you have sold a Horse, he comes in great haste to tell you of one, who would have given more for it. If he finds you ill of the Gout, he tells you, he has a most admirable Secret of his Grandmother, for an Ague. Upon seeing you cover any thing, he is sure to ask you what it is; and must needs know

know what your Servant whispered in your Ear. He will interrupt the most serious Discourse, to make you observe a Dog, or a Horse that passes by. Next comes his last Night's Dream, and his Yesterday's Supper; with a grave *Notandum*, that he had but little Appetite. Thence he flies to past Ages, and talks problematically, whether they were preferable to the present Times. Whereupon he concludes, the Weather is good, and that he would have you come with him, to count the Steps of the *Monument*; but that he verily believes it will tire you; for you are grown fat: Yet he is convinced that since the *Monument* was built, *London* is grown much bigger: And perhaps the next thing he tells you he is persuaded of, is, that it will be cold in *November*. There would be no end, in describing all his odd ways of talking. Let us dismiss him, lest he should be as tiresome in his Description, as he is in himself.

EUDOX. It would be a very melancholy thing, if there was no Relief from such Men, by Opportunities of better Company. There is this Advantage, however, from such Persons, that nothing can be a more persuasive Inducement to avoid their Faults, than to have experienced how disagreeable they

they prove in Company. Yet still in this, as in all things else, we must be also convinced, there is scarce any hopes of pleasing every body. Happy is he, who can, at least, satisfy, in some measure, a few reasonable People. One ought not, in common Prudence, to expect any more. It is as hard to have the Approbation, as the Friendship of many. For People are full as various in their Judgments, as in their Affections; and as one, who would make too many Friends, will probably be thought less sincere by them all; so he, that would please every body, will be in danger of being universally disliked. Add to this, that as so few are pleasing to us, we ought not to wonder, that we please but few. It is only a just kind of Retaliation; one Dislike for another. And if we were less partial, we should perhaps find, that our Dislike is the more unreasonable of the two. This will, at least, make us more tractable, more obliging, and more fit for all the Duties of Society, and Conversation.

CRITOM. To specify all the Qualifications requisite to compleat a Man of fine, and agreeable Conversation, and enumerate all the contrary Faults, would be an immense Task. Methinks we have discoursed the Matter far enough. Unless perhaps I may be allowed to wish you would explain your
Minds

Minds a little farther, than you have hitherto done, upon a just Freedom in giving ones Opinion, when the Discourse is upon learned Matters; and of carrying on a Dispute in Conversation. If you will be pleased to reflect upon what passed in the Company we were last in, you will easily imagine, why I would have these two Points a little farther explained.

EUDOX. When the Discourse happens to be upon some learned Subject, for Example upon the Works of some celebrated Authors, it should neither be with the Boldness of a Pedantick Critick, nor yet is there need of as many cautious Apprehensions, as if one was afraid of a *Præmunire*. Even where Authors have gained almost an universal Esteem, yet sure there is a reasonable Freedom, that may be taken, if not in finding Fault with them in some Particulars, at least of not admiring them in some neglected Places. Tho many are their Beauties, why must all their Strokes be thought charming? or why may not one forbear admiring, or approve in some Degree below wondering? No Author is perfect in all respects; and in familiar Conversation, when we give our Opinion, it is not to be imagined (unless a Man's odd Criticisms have made him infamous) that we think, our private Sentiments are a certain Rule of Wit, and Worth.

CLEAND.

CLEAND. In Justice, it is to be presumed, that in such Occasions, one's Design is not to pronounce on the absolute Worth of a Performance, but only to tell familiarly, what it appears to him; nor to fix what ought to be other Mens Opinion of it, but only what he finds it, according to his private Sense. And therefore, a considerable Liberty may be taken in the Case; provided he lets it sufficiently appear, that he speaks not of what things are absolutely in themselves, but only of what they are relatively to his present Notions, and with a Disposition to be better informed. To turn indeed an *Aristarchus*, and be very positive, that Authors have just as much Merit, as we allow them, will make the Company think us impertinent, and vain. The same is to be observed in opining upon other Matters. Particularly to avoid the Appearance of pretending to over-rule other Peoples Sentiments by our own; which in Conversation is very disagreeable, and indeed very ridiculous in itself.

EUDOX. As to Disputes in Company, I see little to be added, to what we have already observed. In general, it may pass for a Principle, that it is equally wrong, to assent to every thing, that is advanced in Conversation; and to nothing. There could
scarce

scarce be any Conversation, if all were of one Opinion ; and hardly any thing but wrangling, if never of the same. Always dissenting would inevitably breed Quarrels ; and a little Difference of Sentiments is necessary to support Conversation ; which would otherwise soon languish and be at an end. The Difficulty is, when we are of a different Opinion, not to maintain it with so great Eagerness, as to let the Variety of Sentiments pass to a Variance of Wills. Often therefore, the Force of our Arguments must be dissembled as we lately were observing ; or so smoothly managed, as never to shew, that we have the Advantage of Wit, and Superiority of Genius, as well as in point of Truth. For the same Reason, we must not give others the Displeasure, of making it too evident, that they are grossly mistaken. Our Opinions must be delivered in so civil, and so obliging a manner, as to have no Appearance of Men, who think themselves of such a Capacity, as makes them infallible. And certainly, if we would reflect, how often we frame our Judgments too suddenly, and how doubtful are the grounds of them in most difficult Matters, we should seldom be very positive, or much apt to lose our Patience, or good Humour, when others do not immediately submit to our Notions.

CLEAND.

CLEAND. With those, and the like Precautions, Disputes would often prove of great Advantage. They elevate the Mind ; and the very Warmth of a civil Contention, strikes out Flashes of Reason, by a sort of Collision. Wittier Thoughts will often occur in the Heat of a Dispute, than in the most serious Study. However, I think it was with Reason that we observed before, that Disputes are very seldom allowable in a numerous Company, where two Disputants engross the Discourse to themselves, and are a Spectacle to the whole Assembly. Besides, Men in publick are more unwilling to yield, or seem defeated. Thus the chief Advantage is lost, while they resolve to talk on at any rate, rather than own they have nothing to reply to the Purpose.

EUDOX. As for Disputes in smaller Companies, one may speak with Vivacity and Briskness ; yet still so as to elevate only, not to fret an Adversary ; and to raise his Wit, not his Anger. Hence tho' a little Jest may perhaps be allowed, upon the Insufficiency of his Proofs ; yet it should touch upon nothing, but precisely the Point in Dispute. Foreign Banters from other Heads, will look as if you thought to offend, rather than argue ; and the Conference will soon turn from Arguments to Injuries. When you think
you

you have gained an Advantage, either seem to take little notice of it ; or at least attribute it rather to the Goodness of your Cause, than to that of your Wit. Under these Cautions, Disputes would be far from proving odious in Company ; whereas by neglecting such Methods, they are generally intolerable.

CRITOM. They never appeared more so in any one, than in *Eranistius*. He scarce ever began a Dispute, but he ended in a Quarrel. He was no sooner pressed, but he flew into a Passion ; spluttering with greatest vehemence, when he had least to say ; and doubling his Words, as Reasons failed him. Any thing of a close Argument would soon work him into a foam. Methinks, however, he began to be something mended, before I went into the Country.

CLEAND. Thanks to our Stars (to use one of his favorite Expressions) we have been but little troubled with his Company of late. Tho' indeed, to do him justice, he seems to be less cholerick in such Occasions. Yet still much too vehement, running on in a Hurry, without giving others time to reply, or himself to think. He still imagines a Multiplicity of Words may pass for an Abundance of Sense, and makes the best he can of a loud

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Voice,

Voice, and strong Breast. If he cannot convince, he will stun you at least, and force you to hear him, tho' you cannot understand him. Whatever you may think of his Head, he will oblige you to own, that his Lungs are sound. When by talking every thing that occurs, he stumbles upon any thing of a Reason, and his Heat has left him Reflection enough to perceive it, he will repeat it so often, and in so triumphant a Manner, that you will not easily come off without a Head-ach. But, generally, after his tempestuous Disputes (for I know not what softer Term to give them) the main Question is just where it was. He leaves you at the same Point, and continuing the Dispute, seldom brings it nearer a Conclusion.

CRITOM. He brought with him that disputing, that vehement, and that never-yielding Humour, from the Schools. A voluble Tongue, and something like a speculative Turn of Genius, led him into that way, which he could never quite leave. He and some others I have met with, have made me sometimes reflect upon a Place of Dr. *Burnet's Theory of the Earth*. ----- Here is the Place I mean. (m) ----- " It often happens,

(m) *Book. I. chap. I.*

" that

“ that scholastick Learning, like a Trade,
 “ does so fix a Man in a particular Way,
 “ that he is not fit to judge of any thing,
 “ that lies out of that Way ; and so his
 “ Learning becomes a clog to his natural
 “ Parts, and makes him more indocile, and
 “ more incapable of new Thoughts, and
 “ new Improvements, than those that have
 “ only the Talents of Nature. As Masters
 “ of Exercise had rather take a Scholar that
 “ never learned before, than one that has
 “ had a Master ; so, generally one would
 “ rather chuse a Reader without Art, than
 “ one ill instructed with Learning, but opi-
 “ niative, and without Judgment. Yet it
 “ is not necessary, they should want either ;
 “ and Learning, well placed, strengthens
 “ all the Powers of the Mind”. Such as
 here the *Theorist* would chuse a Reader, such
 would I chuse a Companion ; rather one of
 good Sense, than of great Learning.

EU D O X. And in that I shall readily agree
 with you. But will you give me leave, upon
 your mentioning the *Theorist*, to tell you,
 it is but lately that I have read him. I
 know not how I delayed so long to peruse
 a Work so much talked of, and often re-
 commended to me by a Friend, whom I
 much esteem. And I know still less, now

I have read it, how that Friend came to like it so much.

CRITOM. I suppose you will not deny, that the *Theorist* shews a great deal of Genius, Wit, and Learning.

EUDOX. All that I shall easily allow him. But I fear his Genius is too unruly, and that it was naturally better fitted for Poetical, than for other Systems. His Style, too, shews, that he might have been well turned to metrical Harmony.

CLEAND. Instances of a Poetical turn of Style appear in many Places. Give me leave to read one to you, which I shewed, not long since, to one, who was surprized to hear me say, That when I was reading the *Theorist*, it often seemed to me, that I was reading a Poet, rather than a Philosopher. After he had been firing the Sea, he goes on to consume the Rocks, and Mountains, in these Words. (n) “ But let us leave the Sea
“ in this humble Posture, and go on to attack the Rocks, and Mountains, which
“ stand next in our Way. See how scornfully they look down upon us, and bid defiance to all the Elements. They have
“ born the Thunder and Lightning, and

(n) *Book 3. chap. 9.*

“ all the Artillery of the Skies for innume-
 “ rable Ages ; and do not fear the crack-
 “ ling of Thorns and Shrubs, that burn at
 “ their Feet. Let the Towns, and Cities
 “ of the Earth, say they, be laid in Ashes ;
 “ let the Woods, and Forests blaze away ;
 “ and the fat Soil of the Earth fry in its own
 “ Grease : These things will not affect us ;
 “ we can stand naked in the midst of a Sea
 “ of Fire, with our Roots as deep as the
 “ Foundations of the Earth, and our Heads
 “ above the Clouds of the Air, &c.” Might
 not such a Style as this, make one think, an
 Author might have risen to a good Degree of
 the *Statian* Way.

EUDOX. However, it must be owned,
 that his Style is generally fine. As to the
 Fire of Imagination and Fancy, which might
 incline us to think, that whatever made him a
 Philosopher, spoiled a better Poet, there
 are many Instances. At the Beginning of his
 Work he earnestly lays in a *Caveat* against
 those, who are apt to call new Systems by
 the Name of *Romances*. This was from a
 Consciousness of what Men would be apt to
 think, from the Nature of his Work. He
 could not possibly but apprehend that, such
 a Name would be given to his *Theory*. There
 are Flights enough in his first Volume, to

prove upon him the Influence of a Poetical Imagination working strongly into Fictions. But in the second Volume, where he comes to the *Conflagration*, the Fire of Fancy perfectly rages. An unruly Heat and wild Flame seems to overpower him.

CLEAND. It is indeed full of *Æstuations*, and *Combustions*, of *sulphureous Eruptions*, and *bituminous Liquefactions and Ebullitions*, of *glowing Lumps*, and *igneous Balls*, and *melted Rocks*. Infine he is strangely full of *Vulcanoes*, and of *Strumboloes*; and never knows when to have done with Smoke, and Fire, and Flame. You see his heated Imagination takes a particular Pleasure in the Blaze, and he burns and glows with the Delight.

EUDOX. Methinks, indeed, one cannot but judge, that, if he had been less diverted with the Scene, he would not have repeated it over, and over so often. The whole might have been dispatched in a few leaves, had he not been too much pleased with the *Æstuations* of his Fancy, not to draw it out into a large flaming Volume. But we may perhaps, some other time, discourse upon what may appear Philosophical in that Work. At present it has, I know not how, led us too far from the Subject, we were upon.

To

To return to the Point, which occasioned this Digression : It must be granted, that many bring from the Schools a disputing, or even a wrangling Humour. But it is no less true, that where a School-education is rightly seconded with proper Improvements of civil, and polite Manners, it is a great help, to fit a Man for the best Conversation. For it frames, and habituates the Mind to a close coherency of what he says, and to a nice distinctive Judgment of what is advanced, and draws it off from the rambling, unconnected and trifling way of reasoning, which makes the Conversation of several, otherwise ingenious Men, less solid, and less entertaining by far, than they would have proved, had they been more acquainted with the Scholastick Methods.

CRITOM. That is what no Man, who understands close and just Reasoning, can deny. He will soon perceive in Company, who they are, that have been educated in those Methods ; tho' they use nothing like to any *Logical*, or *Metaphysical* Terms. An Affectation of these is, indeed, very ridiculous. And it is much better never to have known any thing of them, than to use them in a Pedantick manner, or to be running into an affected splitting of Formalities, and
into

into airy Speculations, under a Pretence of being a close Reasoner.

CLEAND. Certainly, there never was a more odd Affectation of that Kind, than in *Polyphagius*. There was a strange Mixture in him of the Gross, and the Subtle. All his Conversation was, either in *Metaphysicks*, or in Kitchens. One while, you could have nothing from him, but airy Speculations ; and soon after, nothing but of good Cheer.

CRITOM. Some think, that *Martial* the Poet, was surnamed *Cook*, because he speaks so often of Eating. Several might well deserve a like Name, from their talking so frequently of *Soups*, *Ragoûts*, and *Fricaseys*. Few Subjects are more unworthy of a reasonable Man's Discourse, or betray a greater Meanness of Mind. It will be generally found, that the Head is poorly furnished, where there is much Room for Thoughts of the Belly. Sometimes, indeed, it is otherwise. But when Men are capable of better Discourse, it is strange they do not reflect, how they debase themselves, by dwelling much upon such mean Subjects.

CLEAND. Some again, tho' less despicable at first, by not dwelling upon any low and mean Subjects ; yet tire no less surely at length, by dwelling upon no one Subject at
all

all. Meer *Chatterers*, who should rather be said to prate, than to discourse. It is related as a Saying, of *Scaliger* (o) That the *Germans* care not what Wine they drink, if it is but Wine ; nor what *Latin* they speak, if it is but *Latin*. Nor do those Praters care what they talk, so they do but talk.

EUDOX. When to that prating Humour, there is joined, as it often happens, that of perpetually evaporating into a giddy sort of Mirth, with loud and groundless Laughter, and a no less noisy, than unseasonable Levity, what can be more disagreeable Company to reasonable Men.

CRITOM. Perhaps these giddy Laughters, and Men, who would always pass for gay and merry Fellows, are no less troublesome, than those, who are perpetually difficult and morose : Such as turn every thing to Vinegar, and sour themselves, even with the best Humours of others. Nay even most with these, as being most opposite to themselves. *Dyscolus*, in the old Play of *Randolph*, is no bad Representation of such uneasy, peevish, fretful Tempers. There is indeed a vile Excess of Courtesy in *Colax* ; yet there is also an odd Extremity of Peevishness and imper-

(o) In the *Scalegerana*.

continent Distaste in *Dyscolus*. Scarce had *Colax* (p) given him the Character of Pious, Just, Religious, and Wise, but the testy old Fellow replies :

Pious ? Religious ? he takes me for a Fool. Vertuous, and Just ? Sir, did I ever cheat you, Cozen, or gull you ; that you call me Just, And Vertuous ?

And thus he goes on, turning every thing into a ground of Vexation, and fretting. Nor are such Tempers so very rare, in the main ; tho' perhaps not commonly carried quite so far.

EUDOX. Considering such Tempers, and the many other Humours, and Ways of Conversation, which we have been speaking of now in several Conferences, it can be no Wonder, that sensible Men are so little satisfied with such Company, as they generally meet. For my own part, I can add, that your good Company, with that of *Timander*, *Charisus*, *Eumanthus*, and some few others, has contributed to make me more difficult in the Matter. Living in a warm Country, makes one more sensible of the Cold, upon going into *Northern Climates* ;

(p) Muses Looking-glass. *Act. 2. Scene. 1.*

and

and what wonder, such good Company should make me less easy in that of others, so very different? I will say nothing in particular of you two. For tho' I might, without fearing a Suspicion of Flattery, yet I could not without making your Modesty suffer by your Praise. But besides the other agreeable and fine Gentlemen, we are mutually acquainted with already, I am engaged to bring you both to-night into the Company of one, who fully answers my highest Ideas of excellent Conversation. You know I mean *Aristus*; nor are you ignorant, why I have hitherto delayed bringing you acquainted with him. He is equally free and easy, and yet grave, learned, and instructive. These fixt Qualities he always retains in his most familiar Entertainments with his Acquaintance and Friends. And tho' some, perhaps, may think otherwise; yet, I believe no Conversation is harder to be rightly maintain'd, than that among Friends.

CRITOM. Methinks that Notion sounds strangely. Wherein do you apprehend the particular Difficulty of conversing among Friends?

EUDOX. In several respects. Friends being frequently together, unless they have a great Variety of Discourse, they will talk them-

themselves dry, or tire one another with Repetitions of the same things. Then, how hard is it, never to abuse that Freedom, which Friendship and Intimacy creates ; never to let it appear, that you reflect upon any thing, which looks as if you deserved a Preference from superior Talents ; never to speak so positively, as if you required an Assent, as a Duty of Friendship ? Again : To rectify the Mistakes, or correct the Faults of a Friend, is, you know, the truest, and withal the most difficult Part of a Friend. There are few, that do not want it ; fewer, that can bear it ; and perhaps, fewest of all, that can do it right. Nor is it less hard, not to prejudice them by Flattery and Connivence, than not to displease them by Correction. It is Sir *Walter Montague's* Counsel : *always to praise our Friends something less, than we love them.* We ought also, to let our Indulgence to their Failures be something less, than our Affection.

CLEAND. Give me leave to add, that frequent Significations of Friendship are requisite to maintain its Warmth. And yet, it is hard not to diminish it by over-fond, and impertinent Protestations, which argue a greater Weakness of Mind, than Sincerity of Heart.

CRITOM.

CRITOM. Indeed, I could never endure your sempiternal Whiners of Love, and Protesters of a flaming Affection. They are a Plague to their Friends, and a Jest to others. True Friendship is of a more manly Temper, and knows the Medium between being kind, and weak. What can be more nauseous than one, who is perpetually talking of how much he loves you?

CLEAND. But tho' excessive Marks of Affection displease, there is a Caution to be had, in not rejecting them with too much Contempt and Rigour. And sure, even the over-stretched Significations of Friendship are better, than that kind of Love, which as *Moliere* expresses it, *is made just like Hatred*. That, I mean, which is always complaining, finding fault, and expostulating upon some Pretence or other of Neglect, or Coldness. Sir *William Temple* says (q) he has observed, *Expostulations are apt to end well between Lovers; but ill between Friends*. And Sir *Henry Wotton* (r) calls it, a wise and prophetic Saying of a Friend to the Earl of *Essex*, when, upon the *Earl's* Contestations with the Queen, he told him: *Such*

(q) In his Letters. vol. 1. pag. 313.

(r) In the *Parallel*.

Courses as those are, like Hot-waters, which help at a Pang ; but if they be too often used, will spoil the Stomach.

EUDOX. As the Reasons we have been mentioning, make it harder, than is commonly supposed, to manage rightly our Conversation with Friends ; so one may venture to add, that conversing with Friends does, very often, make us less fit to converse with others. Particularly, because presuming upon the Indulgence of Friends, we easily neglect, with them, several Points of Accuracy in Behaviour and Expressions, which we observe more carefully in other Company. But, by degrees, those Neglects grow habitual ; and it is not only before Friends, that we forget to be upon our Guard. Yet this constant Guard is requisite, to arrive at any perfect Degree of Conversation, whether with Friends, or others. It is in this, as in Style. Both must be perfected, rather by Care and Practice, than by Reading and Instruction.

CLEAND. It is a Saying of Mr. Osborne, That King Charles, by Necessity, gained a more majestick Pen, than the Crown he lost----and so surpassed his Father King James, that thence one may learn ; Experience is a better Tutor, than Buchanan. And thus, no doubt
but,

but, Occasions of conversing with such Company, as makes us careful of our Words and Behaviour, will be found a better Tutor, than *Bellegarde*, or whatever Author you please, upon such Subjects.

EUDOX. Accordingly, I dare assure you both, that you will find no Authors so instructive in the Case, as conversing with *Aristus*. But I must forewarn you, that he is one, who will improve gradually in your Esteem. His Person, indeed, will strike you at first. His Looks, and Air, and Mien speak much in his Favour. It may be said of him, in that regard, as *Tacitus* says of *Agricola*, (r) That *his very Looks would make one easily believe him a great Man, and willingly a good one*. Nor do I (when thus I commend him before-hand) forget, what I lately mentioned from Sir *Walter Montague*. Your Acquaintance with him will convince you, I am not partial in his Character. Only, as I was going to say, his first Discourses are not particularly surprizing. The engaging Force of his Company increases at every Visit.

CRITOM. It often happens, that the nicest Pieces, both in Nature, and Art, strike less at first; than others of a far less Perfection.

(r) In vitâ *Agricolæ*.

tion. It is observed (I think by the *Theorist*, of whom we were lately speaking) that the crooked Tower of *Pisa* is more admired by many, than several other straight Towers, which are much higher. Thus, some odd Humours, and whimsical Men are often more admired at first; than others of a superior, but regular Frame and Method of Conversation.

CLEAND. What you was saying of the Tower of *Pisa*, naturally brings to my Mind an Application of what Mr. *Addison* (s) says of St. *Peter's* Church at *Rome*, in these Lines.

“ St. *Peter's* seldom answers Expectation at
 “ first entering it, but enlarges itself on all
 “ Sides insensibly, and mends upon the
 “ Eye every Moment. The Proportions are
 “ so very well observed, that nothing ap-
 “ pears to Advantage, or distinguishes it-
 “ self above the rest. It seems neither ex-
 “ tremely high, nor long, nor broad, be-
 “ cause it is all of them in a just Equality.
 “ Ason the contrary, in our *Gothick* Cathe-
 “ drals, the Narrowness of the Arch makes
 “ it rise in Height, or run out into Length:
 “ the Lowness often opens it in Breadth,
 “ or the Defectiveness of some other Parti-
 “ cular, makes any single Part appear in
 “ greater Perfection”. Thus Mr. *Addison*

(s) In his *Travels*.

of

of that famous Building; and the Like is often observable in Men.

EUDOX. Some, indeed, have at first been apt to think, there was something of Excess in *Aristus*, with regard to Ceremony, or Niceties of Civility. Nor will I deny, but on my first being in his Company, I had some Thoughts of applying a Saying of *Velleius Paternulus*. This ingenious Author, speaking of the little Taste and Skill, which *Memmius* had of *Corinthian* Pictures, and Statues; adds that, *No doubt it had been better for the Commonwealth, to have remained unskilful of them; than to understand them to so great a Degree.* (t) Thus, methought, I could have imagined, it would have been better for *Aristus*, to have been rather something ignorant of Niceties and Punctilio's of Ceremony, than to understand them too much. But I soon found my Mistake. For tho' his Politeness of Manners is always extraordinary great; yet, in the main, it is never excessive, nor troublesome, nor in the least affected. As to his great Learning, it is only perceived by Time, and Occasion. For tho' few Men have more, never any one

(t) *Paternulus*. l. i. Non tamen dubites, quin magis pro Republicâ fuerit, manere ad huc rudem *Corinthiorum* intellectum, quàm in tantum ea intelligi.

seemed less fond of shewing it. The Extent of his Knowledge is the more to be wondered at, because, altho' he went through a regular Education, with due Care to perform the usual Exercises remarkably well; yet he never was thought particularly Studious.

CLEAND. Perhaps it might be said of him, as the *Marquis de Maignely* said of *Marillac*, that *he had the Art of finding more, than four and twenty Hours in the Day.* (u) For I have known some, who by a right Management of unobserved, and even broken Intervals of Time, read, and studied far more than was imagined.

EUDOX. It is certain at least, that, as the Learning of *Aristus* now, so his Application, even in his Youth, might be said to sit so easy upon him, that both were greater than they seemed.

CRITOM. I presume, at least, he never was under any of the odd Suspicions, which, it seems, fell upon *Campanella*. It is related (w) of him, that having in his Youth gravelled an antient *Professor* in a publick Dispute, the old *Don* got him called to the *Inquisition*, as one, who, sure enough, had dealt

(u) In the *Mélanges de Marville*.

(w) By *Rossi*, in his *Pinacotheca*.

with the Devil : Otherwise, how could one, not only young, but who seemed to study little, be so learned.

EUDOX. Poor *Campanella* was unfortunate in that, as in other Cases. *Aristus* was not only free from such strange Suspicions being cast upon him, but still was one, of whom it might be said, as I have heard it was of another very learned Man ; That he knew all Arts, but the *Black-Art*. It is true, however, that a great deal of his Knowledge is such, as he never drew from Schools, or Books. Nor do I know how he can be described, in this respect, better, than in what Mr. *Dryden* says of King *Charles*, in these Lines (x)

*His Conversation, Wit, and Parts,
His Knowledge in the noblest useful Arts,
Were such, Dead Authors could not give ;
But Habitudes, of those who live ;
Who lighting him, did greater Lights receive:
He drain'd from all, and all they knew ;
His Apprehension quick, his Judgment true :
That the most Learn'd with Shame confess,
His Knowledge more, his Reading only less.*

When to this I add, that in Honour, Worth, and every Virtue, he is still more eminent,

(x) In his *Threnodia Augustalis*. St. xi.

there

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there can be no Wonder, you should long to be introduced to his Acquaintance.

CRITOM. And as it is near the Time, you fix'd in your Message to us. So I see *Cleander's* Coach is coming to the Door, to take us up.

EUDOX. I shall accompany you thither, very secure, he will fully answer the Character, you have heard.



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TACTICS, of the ...
TACTICS, of the ...

V

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VARIOUS THINGS in ...
VARIOUS THINGS in ...

W

WATER (Yale) ...
WATER (Yale) ...
WATER (Yale) ...



F I N I S

E R A T A

THE ...
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